

# **Structures of Everyday Lives of Women: The Former Enclaves on the India-Bangladesh Border**

A Dissertation Submitted

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**Sikkim University**



In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the  
**Degree of Master of Philosophy**

By

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**June 2019**

## Declaration

I, Anamika Roy, hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “**Structures of Everyday Lives of Women: The Former Enclaves on the India-Bangladesh Border**” is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and this dissertation has not been submitted by me to any other University or Institute.

This is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of **Master of Philosophy**, to the Department of Geography, School of Human Sciences, Sikkim University.

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All the assistance and help received during the course of the investigation have been duly acknowledged by her.

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*Dedicated to the Women of the Former  
Enclaves whose Endless Struggles Taught me the  
Meaning of Life*

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study:

Boundary, borders, borderlands have drawn attention to political geographical studies for a long time. Etymologically the 'boundary' or 'border' could be "that which binds," a place of friction or meeting where alterity is negotiated (Szary 2015 p.13). Modern nation-states use borders as a limit to exercise powers and control. Borders at all scales are used as a power container to maintain state territoriality; a kind of space where the relationship with otherness can be developed in such a way as to allow for identity-building and place-making (ibid). Further, 'border' has multiple meanings; as has been used to refer to a number of ideas, ranging from a geographically delimited space to using it as a metaphor for cultural and other 'borderlands' of post-modern discourses such as gender, race, social and psychological border (Donnan & Wilson 1999). Borders can act as barriers and at the same time functions as a bridge between nation-states and their citizens, especially those living at the trans-territorial location. Thus, echoing Samaddar (1999 p.20) it can be said that borders "exteriorize the interior and interiorize the exterior".

Though all borders are used to divide and delimit territories of nation-states, not all borders are associated with similar border landscape. An examination of a contemporary map of the regions can reveal the odd border arrangements that have resulted from the centuries-long struggle for maintaining control over territories (Diener & Hagen 2010). Political oddities in the borderland have always been the source of international contestation among the nation states in the 20th century. In a similar vein, enclaves are one of those geopolitical oddities in the borderland.

Location complexities of these enclaves are still a matter of contention among various nation-states of the world. Enclaves are fragmented parts of the territory of a country that is entirely surrounded by another country. Enclaves are divided by their own country through the international border and completely lost within another state. As these enclaves lie on the margins of other state and have no surface communication to the mainland, they impose challenges to the nation-state to maintain its territoriality.

Enclave not only problematises the territorial integrity of the state but also affects the people living inside this tiny territory. Furthermore, these fragmented territories are not only delimited by political borders but also often delimited by symbolic borders. Though symbolic these enclave borders create "own" and "other" binary between its own territory and the surrounded host country. But like other national borders, these enclave borders also exist only in time. Enclaves are not static, because enclaves usually get disappeared when the nation-state solves its territorial disputes, hence, enclave borders and its territories are also dynamic in nature. The dynamism of this fragmented territories and borders again shapes the life of the people living inside and in the vicinity of the enclaves. This study aims to capture border narratives of such a complex geopolitical territory, in the context of the India-Bangladesh border.

Borders have always been a preferred research theme in political geography but borders are not understood solely by political geographers. Feminist geography, which is an emerging sub-discipline in the field of geography, has also contributed to the understanding of borders. Unlike traditional political geographers, feminist geographers try to understand border in a critical way. By engaging "everydayness", the core theme of feminist research, in border studies, they highlighted the commonalities and differences in border practices. The study attempts to engage

feminist lens which has mostly been ignored in studies of the borderland. It wants to explore how enclaves like geopolitical territory shape women's lives in the India-Bangladesh Borderlands. It intends to do so, by exploring everyday life of women in the former enclaves of India and Bangladesh<sup>1</sup>.

To understand the hidden geographies of borderland, everyday life needs to be understood, because borders are open to contention at the level of state and in everyday life (Johnson et al. 2011). Cross-border interdependency in the borderland is very high and it is reflected in their everyday lives. Enclaves are the spaces, where the enclave people interact and negotiate borders in their daily life, hence every day can reflect the nuances of enclave life.

Here, everyday life denotes various actions, emotions etc in day to day life and border denotes enclave-host country border and international border.<sup>2</sup>This study is an attempt to explore, how ordinary women's life is connected to multiple border making process in the former enclaves of India-Bangladesh border. The study wants to go beyond the state-centric academic work on border and enclave. The emphasis here is to apply

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<sup>1</sup> The enclaves, explored in the study are exchanged but the study still emphasises in using the term "enclave" rather than former enclaves which may be problematic for some readers who justify the term in a political sense. The title of the dissertation suggests a need to use the term former enclave, however, the experience in the field led the researcher to emphasise on using the term 'enclave'. Therefore both the phrase –enclave and former enclaves, are used to maintain clarity about the understanding of the peculiar geography of the enclave. The enclave residents whose narratives have been produced here, they are stigmatised and distinguished by the term 'chit' or enclave from the surrounding people. And the labelling is so strong that they still used the phrase 'chit' or 'enclave' in their daily lives. Furthermore, it is required to use both the terms to denote the source of contention, deprivation, vulnerabilities that are linked with the emergence of this labelling in their life and the transformation that is linked with the enclave exchange.

<sup>2</sup> The enclaves in the study are exchanged, and the political boundary between enclave-host state is officially removed but the enclave people still identify themselves as enclave residents and their surrounding residents as mainland or host residents. [For detail discussion see chapter 3]. It is found that the emotional border is still instrumental so does the enclave-host people binary. So, the use of the former enclave-host state boundary is useful to portray the bordering aspects. With same token Indian/Bangladeshi mainland residents are referred to as mainland or host residents and enclave residents are referred to as enclave dweller/residents/people.



gender lens interrogating enclaves, which seems to be missing in most of the research on enclave. Therefore, it necessitates exploring how women's daily action, emotion, and life course are intricately related to the multiplicity of borders and dynamism of territoriality. It also explicitly evaluates how the dynamism of border and territory inform the everyday life of women in the former enclaves of India-Bangladesh borderlands, in a historical context. In doing so it explores the gendered dimension of enclave life, the diverse experience of men and women.

## **1.2 Contextual Literature:**

As the focus of the study is to ascertain a critical inquiry on enclave by adopting a gender lens, therefore it is crucial to discuss the relevant literature which makes the base of understanding of the whole research. Inspired by the critical works of feminists in the various field of political geographic study, this study also offers an insight to look at enclaves from a feminist viewpoint. This section is organised to provide an overview of the literature which connects the aspects of territory, border, gender, everyday and enclave. Therefore, an attempt has been made here to discuss the relevant literature on the above-said aspects.

This section is divided into four sub-sections whereas the first section talks about territory and border, the second section talks about the critical works by feminist in the understanding of border and territory. The third section talks about everyday life and the last one discusses enclave related works. While the first two sub-sections help in examining the need for engaging feminist viewpoint in the political geographic research agenda, the last one reviews the works in enclave research. After the broad discussion of relevant literature, it indicates the research gap which forms the research problem and aim of the investigation.

### **1.2.1 Territory and Territoriality:**

Territory refers to sections, space occupied by individuals, social groups or institution. Sometimes territory is used to understand region or place or locality. The modern meaning of territory is related to the legal concepts of sovereignty which imply that there is one final authority in a political community (Taylor and Flint 2000, cited in Paasi 2003). Paasi (2003) considers territory as a social process in which social space and social action are inseparable. Territories are made and destroyed in individual and social action (ibid). "Hence, they are typically contested and actively negotiated" (ibid p.110). He argues that the power of territoriality is based on ideas of inclusion and exclusion between social groups by delimiting boundaries (ibid). He argued that territories are not just a geographical space; it is a social space that is made and destroyed in social and individual action (Paasi 2005). It is the political, economic, cultural, governmental and other practices and associated meanings that make territory and territorialize everyday life (ibid). According to him territory and borders, both are social construction (Paasi 2003). Knight (1982) remarked that territories are passive, and human beliefs and actions gave it a meaning.

The territory becomes the place where action and social thoughts are possible while entering into contact with, transforming, and "deforming" (Di Méo 1991, cited in Biaggio 2015). Territory "is a means by which we define relations both among humans and between humans and objects within an area, communicating these relations by marking boundaries and stabilizing them under a regime of enforcement" (Dahlman 2009; p.80). Territories are the manifestation of power relations and territoriality is employed to control the particular area or territory. Territoriality is crucial in defining social relations and location within which a territory shapes

membership in a group (Sack 1986, cited in Paasi2003). Sack further states that territoriality not only is medium of creation and reproduction of social life but also a medium to create and maintain much of the geographic context through which we experience the world and give it meaning (ibid). He argues that territorial units emerge as part of the socio-spatial system and identifies in social action and social consciousness (ibid). So, territoriality is not a static, unchanging form of state behaviour (Paasi 1999).

Boundary comprises the basic elements in the construction of territory and to maintain it. Territorial power and control manifest themselves in the border landscape. The power of territory is based on the fact that borders create an arena of inclusion and exclusion between social groups. To define its territoriality, the state creates borders that divide it from other political units. Territory and boundary have always been a simultaneous expression of the links between space, power, and knowledge (Passi 1996). Boundaries become crucial only when sovereignty and citizenship come together (ibid). Modern state territories require clearly bounded sovereign spaces which marks the division of inside and outside because territoriality and sovereignty manifest within fixed boundaries (ibid). Therefore bordering practice is necessary to understand the territory.

### **1.2.2 Boundary and Border Practices:**

The categories boundary, border, and borderlands have witnessed various disciplinary push and pull. A number of political geographers, international relations scholars, sociologists, literary theorists, and anthropologists have entered into border studies. Even in human geography, the engagements of cultural, feminist, postcolonial approaches in border studies challenged the traditional representation of borders. A

mapping of these and a thorough understanding of their positioning will show the interdisciplinarity in this field.

The border has been termed as a peripheral line or zone of separation between states to create the notion of 'us' and 'other'. Sociologists and anthropologists understand borders as abstract lines of separation between the 'us' and the 'them', the 'here' and the 'there', and as constituting the very essence of difference (Newman 2006). Historians treat them as a post-colonial phenomenon shaped by cumulative past events (Banerjee & Chen, 2013). Earlier, Border has been understood as exclusive lines between power container and a line-centric approach has dominated in political geography (Paasi & Prokkola; 2008). Political geographer understands border at the scale of the state, "since international political borders provide one of the most explicit manifestations of the large-scale connection between politics and geography" (Newman & Paasi 1998; p.186).

Human geographers, particularly political geographers have contributed in various ways in international boundary and border studies (Hartshorne, 1936; Jones, 1943; Minghi, 1963; Paasi, 2005). Minghi (1963) delimited eight types of research as 'boundary studies' in political geographical enquiry: a. research on disputed areas, b. the impact of boundary change c. the evolutionary aspects of boundaries, d. delimitation and demarcation of the boundary, e. exclaves and other tiny states, f. different offshore boundaries, g. natural resources and disputes of boundaries, and h. internal boundaries. In early literature, borders are used unquestionably to denote territorial borders between states. But the currently the theorization or conceptualization of international boundaries are as social processes of bordering and bounding (Megoran 2011).

In the recent border studies, borders “are not merely physical, empirical lines or zones that can be frozen on maps and atlases as naturalized entities” but must be conceived of as multidimensional social constructs (Paasi 2001: 22) rather borders are now critically investigated as differentiator of socially constructed mindscapes and meaning (Houtum 2005). Boundaries are not only static, an unchanging feature of the political landscape, they also have their own internal dynamics which affects the life of people and groups who lives within close proximity to the boundary or experience boundary at one stage in their lives (Newman 2003). Borders are historically and politically contingent and continuously recreated based on political, cultural, and economic practices (Stetter 2008a, cited in Sendhardt 2013). Sendhardt (2013) mentioned that territorial borders are not the only borders, rather it is one type of border whereas the other types are functional and symbolic.

From the above discussion, it can be said that borders are not only territorial [state borders], it can be symbolic too. When it is territorial, border means "the lines that enclose state territories" (Newman 2003, p123). Territorial borders are those that separate states or regions. It is the first and foremost and functions as a means to control, to ascribe areas of competence and demarcate jurisdictions (Bonacker 2006, cited in Sendhardt 2013) ; whereas symbolic borders “constitute collective identities” and allow us to “differentiate between the ‘self’ and the ‘other’ (Sendhardt 2013). According to Donnan and Wilson (1999) symbolic boundaries are no less ‘real’ for not being physically marked. Paasi (2005) argued that borders are a dynamic process, social institutions and symbols. Keeping in mind about the recent changes in border studies, Newman and Paasi (1998) have categorized four practices as ‘boundary studies’: These are- ‘a. the disappearance of boundaries; 2) the role of boundaries in the construction of socio-spatial identities; 3) narratives and discourse of boundaries;

and 4) the different spatial scales of boundary construction'. Newman (2006) argued that if we really want to know what borders mean to people, then we need to listen to their personal and group narratives.

Again, Prescott (1987) has suggested the following aspects to study borders; these are- a. boundary as an element of the cultural landscape, b. the impact of the boundary on economic activities, c. the impact of the border on the attitudes of people living within the border region, and d. the effects of borders on state policy. So, the discussion makes a clear sense that the border is not only physical construction on the ground, rather border should be visualised from a broader perspective of differentiation.

### **1.2.3 Territoriality, Border and Feminism:**

The above discussion on territory and boundary reveal that these are social construction that provides a scope to understand these aspects from a feminist point of view. Feminist geographers have widely accepted and used territory and borders as a social-cultural construction in their works. Feminist geographers have criticised the way, the core topic of political geography, territory, and territoriality have been analysed by the political geographer (Sharp 2004). They criticised the very notion of territoriality because it relates to the question of power and the way it is used by different groups and the ways in which power is exercised over territory in an attempt to control people (Staeheli & Kofman 2004).

Many feminists have tried to demonstrate in their research the ways in which gender relations have been used to maintain state security. Feminist scholarship demonstrates the ways in which territory and boundaries are inextricably linked with ideas and

practices associated with the difference (Staeheli & Kofman, 2004). They argued that ignoring these categories and differences may lead us to homogenize the experiences of people who are differently marginalized (ibid). Walter and Staeheli (2004) argued that territory and boundaries which shows political, social and cultural in character are political and gendered.

Feminists have shown that women, being a gendered subject experience and negotiate a boundary that is different from others. Feminists put forward the debate of private and public space in an understanding of territorial control. They understand territory as personal and relational, spaces of exclusion and inclusion and are constructed by formal and informal social boundaries (Walter & Staeheli 2004). Feminists have argued that our body, through which we experience perform and interpret territoriality (ibid). Women's bodies, because of it's vulnerability to exploitation, experience territories, and boundaries differently. Laws (1997: 49) remark can be put here,-"Our bodies make a difference to our experience of places: whether we are young or old, able-bodied or disabled, Black or White in appearance does, at least partly, determine collective responses to our bodies". It is our body through which experience the world and the world experience us, therefore it inevitably shapes our access to the spaces of public and private and our experiences in those places. Our bodies negotiate boundaries in multiple ways, and it influences the nature and pattern of our spatial behaviours. As our bodies carry multiple identities, the negotiations of boundaries and territories also are multiple (Christiansen & Joenniemi 1999, cited in Walter and Staeheli 2004).

Mayer (2004) examines the embodied experiences of women and the continual formation of space, bodies, boundaries. She has shown that women's bodies were

territorialised through rapes during wartime. She has shown the fluid boundary of private and public space where both were used for violence on women and by which men territorialized nationalism. Smith (2012) explored the linkages between social and political conflict and daily life. She examines the complicated ways in which geopolitical conflicts resonate on bodies and construct barriers to the practice of intermarriage between Buddhists and Muslims. She shows the reproductive bodies of women are caught in the geopolitical project to increase territorial extent. She (2011; p. 456-457) argues, "when population becomes part of the territorial struggle, the body itself becomes a geopolitical site". Fenster (1998) has shown how racial, ethnic and religious politics illuminates the manifestation of politics through the socially constructed gender norms and relations. Her study clearly provides a nuanced understanding where women's body, their biological necessities, and ethnicities operate together and blurred the boundary of public-private space. Many feminist geographers have taken into account the emotional experience of women to understand the social construction of border and boundaries. The most prevalent bordering can be seen in women's life where patriarchy and male domination creates the psychological boundary in the women's mind and shapes their everyday life.

Feminist scholarships highlighted the absence of incorporating gender to analyze the construction of boundaries or the creation and representation of border landscapes. Hyndman and Roberts (2002) demonstrate the ways in which boundaries are differently negotiated by refugee women and men because of their gendered subjects, and boundary shapes their lives. Berndt (2001, cited in Walter and Staeheli 2004) discussed the performative aspects of the border and have mentioned that women experience the continuous shift between different spaces and orders as they crisscross political boundaries and the social and economic barriers that accompany borders.



Feminist works show that boundaries are not simply lines of demarcation and exclusion; they are also the subject of struggle and of negotiation in ways that pose challenges for the powers to maintain borders (Runyan 2003, cited in Walter and Staeheli 2004). Territoriality and boundaries are socially and politically constructed based on power relationship between different groups of people. Women's everyday interaction challenges the boundary construction that shapes our everyday life.

#### **1.2.4 Everyday Life and Social Science:**

This section provides an idea of everyday life and its connection with various branches of social science. The everyday has been an essential podium which has been widely investigated in social science. Historians, philosophers of western society have analysed everyday as a focal point in discussing the societal transformation in the various time period. For instance, Jones and Eckart (2002) remarked that shedding light on everyday helps to show the substance of ordinariness and that can show us the microphysics of power. The social historians invoke everyday life of those practices and lives that have traditionally been left out of historical accounts and got hidden under the discourse of dominant (Highmore 2002). In most of the historical writing of everyday life deals with the suffering of the people who are labelled as 'everyday, ordinary people' (Ludtke 1989). In the writing of the history of everyday life, everyday housing, homelessness, clothing, nakedness, eating habits, hunger, love and hate, quarrels, co-operation, anxiety, hopes, memories etc all such details were produced (ibid). The historical perspectives also focused on the suffering of a mass of the population who have been often killed in the past. In sociological work, the development of everyday in the writings was laid in 1920 and 1930s. In sociology, everyday has a great role in Marxist analysis. The key intends of the Marxist

philosophers was to understand the transformation in the everyday as the society advances towards modernisation. For example, the introduction of clocks has changed the way of life and life was started practising according to the rhythms of the clock. The various organisation like a school, church, hospitals were impacted by the representation of time and hence impacted the level of the everyday. Networks and connectivity again caused changes in everyday activity by reducing physical distance and time. In Marxism, everyday is often intermingled with the ideas of modernity. Modernity is a phase where everyday life lost its connection to tradition and people started adjusting with a new way of living (Highmore 2002). Due to the advent of modernity people started moving towards the urban centres leaving behind their rural homestead. This led to the rapid growth of urban centres and consequently a great transformation in everyday life. Modernisation has brought a massive change in the mode of production and thus a massive change in the people's life. It took place in every sphere of life and impacted the activities of everyday life.

#### *1.2.4.1 Everyday and Geographical Enquiry:*

Apart from sociological or historical queries on everyday, everyday remained as a key concern among the geographers. In geographic studies on everyday, the idea of time geography has dominated the field. Although Lefebvre (1947), Braudel (1967) and Certeau (1984) has a profound impact on understanding everyday life, geographers in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century mostly have chosen to understand everyday life by following Torsten Hagerstrand's time geographical approach. Ellegard & Pater (1999) have stressed that time geography and gender research are related to everyday life and we need to focus on everyday life. Both time geography and gender research are concerned how the various aspects of individual life have meshed in the web of

everyday life because every individual and his/her arrangement of daily activities are constituted in the society and it helps to weave the operations of various social institutions into each other (ibid).

In the literature of geography, the term everyday is used to denote those activities which are involved in everyday space. In geography, the terms 'everyday life' and 'everyday geography' often used synonymously. Authors have used time geographical framework as well as other humanistic approaches such as behavioural geography to understand the connection everyday and geographical world. Seamon (2003) described everyday geography as a sum total of people's first-hand involvements with the geographical world in which they live. Reinharz and Rowles (1988; cited in Rollinson 1990) states that the main focus of the everyday framework is on understanding the meaning of experienced reality and conveying that experience in a lived form with as little a priory structuring as possible.

For Eyles (1989) everyday life is the fundamental reality which creates, maintains and transforms us as self-aware and self-conscious individuals. He also stressed on studying everyday by implying time geography because time-space geography charts the possibilities of everyday life by spatial re-arranging and rescheduling of events. Geography of everyday life must investigate those particular responses of people in the concrete socio-spatial setting (ibid). Hanson and Hanson (1993) has stressed the importance of analysing everyday activity pattern in the study of everyday life. They state that the geography of everyday life fascinates us because people's activity patterns help to shape and are shaped by location, space and place (ibid). They suggested to emphasise on household context and spatial context to find out the activity pattern of everyday (ibid). While the study in a household context can tell us

about the gender roles and relation, spatial context can reveal the various constraint in everyday spatial behaviour.

Among human geography's various fields, social geographers used everyday life widely for a bottom-up study. Recently political geographers also accepted everyday to understand the hidden politics in daily life (Megoran 2006; Mountz 2003; Turner 2012; Hagene 2010; Haldrup et al. 2006). Territory, Boundary, and borders -the core topics of political geography are now investigated by employing the theme of everyday life. Political geographers realised the need for studying everyday to understand local politics.

Apart from social geography and political geography, everyday has been a central theme to discuss everyday life in feminist geography (Dyck 2005). Feminist believes in the idea that it is important to examine the apparent inequalities between men and women and its impact on everyday life (Holmes 2009). Feminists believe that it is essential to find out what means for someone to be a woman or a man is different depending on the historical period in which they live (ibid). Feminists have investigated the historical processes which cause a change in the everyday life of women. They not only analysed the impact on early-modernisation but the processes of individualisation, globalisation- the features of late modernisation as these are crucial in shaping the everyday life of men and women in a different way. Feminist have enquired the class differences, cultural differences and other intersectional approaches to find the nuances in the gendered differences in everyday life.

Feminist geographers have mostly used 'everyday' actions to represent women in the structure of society. Feminist geographers also chose to enter into the boredom of mundane life, because they believe that the mundane world is the realm of women's

social life. For feminist geographers, everyday routines of women are important because the banal and trivial events of everyday are bounded in the power structures which limit and confine women (Rose 1993). Feminist geographer has worked on everyday and argued that it is our everyday activities where the gendered distinction of our spatial behaviour occurs. Feminist geographers find the public-private distinction of space in the very ordinary way of daily life. White feminist geographers were very concerned about such division of public and private space in everyday life which had been central to their arguments.

In the classical world, the public sphere signified the power of citizens to take part in political life whereas the private sphere is just opposite to it. Only men were deemed to possess the capacity of citizenship and the public sphere was a masculine one. Again, with the advent of Industrialisation, capitalism the meaning of public and private changes its form due to its changing nature of the economic structure. Feminists find that such a massive change in the production process marked the difference between public and private as women have become spatially and socially confined within the world of domestic works and care giving activities. The public-private debate is a well-discussed agenda among feminist. Feminist have shown that the concept of private and public has a key role in the subordination of women. They are concerned the way space is used in everyday life which creates the distinction of public and private space (Valentine 1989, Koskela 1999). Feminist finds that Private space is the idiom through which "conventional subordination" is operationalized in our society (Massey 1994; cited in Paul 2011).

However, while approaching everyday life and feminism, feminist geographers also relied on Haggerstrand's time geographical approach. In the works of everyday life,

Hagerstrand's time geographical approach is the most widely used approach to study the mundane. Although feminist have criticised the universality of time-geography they found it easier to argue on the differences in everyday life by employing time-geographical approach. In many works of feminist geographers, women's engagement in the household found as a major area where women spend most of their time in a day. For example, in Miller's (1850, 1860 cited in Rose 1993) study, he concluded that women's choice of work during free time was limited by their responsibility of domestic works in the homes. In this way, framing women's everyday routines through time geographical framework was the most preferable for the feminist geographers. Rose has stressed that examining women's life needs the study of ordinary as women are mostly excluded from the field of power and prestige, and time geography admirably suited to the bottom-up study (Rose; 1993).

Time geography emphasizes the reproduction of patriarchy in the prosaic activities of everyday life. The everyday is the arena through which patriarchy is created, recreated and contested also (ibid). It can simply unfold the hidden truth of everyday life where patriarchy dominates over women. Dyck (2005) stressed for close attention to the spaces of everyday life to make the women visible in the rapidly changing world. For her, sketching an image of everyday routine life in the realm of domestic life, neighbourhood, and communities can tell us about the changes and how the local is structured by the wider process and relations of power. This understanding of the local can enable us to understand the wider process from -body to the global.

So the discussion shows that whether in social geography or political or feminist geography, human geographers emphasised on the study of the mundane world to

know the intimate details of access to space and its difference. Their use of everyday shows a variety of ideas related to everyday life.

### **1.2.5 Borderland and Enclave:**

This section tries to review the literature related to enclaves, particularly related to the study area. Enclaves are small fragmented geopolitical territory but it was neglected in most of the political geography research work. Very few scholars have shown interest in studying enclaves and remain under-researched in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Robinson 1959). In the early works of enclaves a state-centric perspective dominates, which ranges from its definition to perceive enclaves as a problem in security of the states. It was after 1930, with Whittlesey's study on Spanish quasi exclave and a tiny state in Pyrenees, enclave research, as part of the geographical study was begun (Minghi 1963). But most of the research on enclaves was limited to understand territorial fragmentation. Catudal (1974b, cited in Whyte 2002) had a systematic study of enclaves that advanced enclave research. In his article on Berlin's boundaries, he provided detailed discussions leading to a resolution of the problem by the allied abandonment of several enclaves to the Purbain return for other concessions.

Lunden (2012) tried to give a theory of exclaves by stating that there are three phases of development of exclaves. He mentions that external territories under the colonial rule are not seen as exclaves, but in the borderline cases, with states that are characterized by the lack of a common political homogeneity, are called conglomerate states. Hence West Berlin during 1961–1989, would be the borderline exclave. Vinokuruv (2007, cited in Shewly 2012) has contributed by defining various types of enclaves around the world. His (2005) work on Kaliningrad which is a newly emerged Russian enclave averted by the EU-Russian relations, reveals its economic

vulnerability due to detachment and insularity. He suggests, when the border would become penetrable by an integration of the mainland and surrounding state, it can reduce the problem of the enclave. Here, he mentions that the border is not a physical phenomenon rather an obstacle which serves as barriers to the free movement of people and goods. Bray (1997) has studied Ladakhi and Bhutanese Enclaves in Tibet which are located in the land of Dalai Lama and he gave a wide description of the origin of these enclaves. But his study causes ambiguities because of Tibet's political status but it surely raises interest for further research.

#### *1.2.5.1 The Coochbihar Enclaves:*

Although more than eighty per cent enclaves in the world are located in the India and East-Pakistan/Bangladesh borderland they remained neglected in the study of enclaves. The western researcher has studied enclaves of the European Union but unconsciously left the Coochbihar enclaves. It is perhaps Karan (1966) who has introduced the Coochbihar enclaves for the first time to the rest of the world. He blamed the unconsciousness of the Boundary Commission about enclave during partition award and suggested that an amiable environment through negotiation by India and Pakistan can relief from the peculiarities on the borderland. His work not only gives information about India-Bangladesh enclaves but is also valuable for geographers because it is the first academic research paper on Coochbihar enclaves which was conducted before the birth of Bangladesh and was published in a geographical journal. Banerjee(1969; in Whyte 2002) has provided little information on the existence of Coochbihar enclaves.

Schendel's (2002) work mostly focuses on the perspective of nationalism and identity making. He mentioned that the indecency of both states caused suffering for a lack of



proper identity. He points out that people of enclaves in India and Bangladesh have developed a distinctive identity other than the identity of a Bangladeshi or an Indian. His work was also able to capture the religious aspects of people and their impact on people's life. Whyte (2002) has provided a wide account of the history and origin of the Coochbihar enclaves. His dissertation is amply informative for knowing the origin of the enclaves. His detailed account on maps with individual descriptions of the enclave is undoubtedly a rich source of information about Coochbihar enclaves. His cartographic description is highly praiseworthy and it has revealed that the growing hostilities between the two countries are the biggest impediment to the exchange of enclaves. His study is a vast study on Coochbihar enclaves but it lacks information on the enclave people's life. Jones (2009) has attempted to describe enclave life from the perspective of sovereignty and has shown how the social life in the enclaves is hampered by the over emphasisation on sovereign power by the states. In another work, Jones (2010) has attempted to reveal about everyday life of enclave people where he also emphasised on Tin Bigha corridor fact. These studies provide a description of the origin of the enclaves and its impact on the everyday lives of the people who continue living in these stateless spaces.

Jamwal (2004) provided an account of border management in the India Bangladesh borderland. His study was not for an academic purpose and was from the perspective of security and border management where he mentioned the enclave as an impediment to the border management. One of the most notable works on enclave life is carried by Shewly (2012). She amply portrays the nuances of enclave life in her study. It takes a shift from the earlier state-centric paradigm to the study enclave. She shows that the enclaves are the state of an exception because they are excluded from legitimate state power but irregularly controlled by the host country's state power. She shows that

enclave people use tactics in their everyday lives to resist state powers. She (2017) highlights the legal vulnerabilities arise in daily life due to the non-citizenship status of the people. She (2012; 2013) shows that vulnerabilities in enclave life are not equal, rather gender causes increased violence to the women in the enclaves.

Cons's (2013) work also took a shift from traditional state-centric works on the enclave. He criticised the earlier scholar for framing enclave people's experience in bare life concept, statelessness and sovereignty prism. His works (2011, 2013) were basically emphasised on Angorpota-Dahagram Bangladesh enclave where he shows the contestation between India and Bangladesh to claim territorial control over the Angorpota-Dohogram enclave. He has shown the struggles and protests of the Dohogram people to be connected to Bangladesh against the state politics which proposed it be merged with Indian territory. Ferdous's (2019) recent work after the exchange of enclaves gives an insight into the social belonging of the enclave people. He has investigated enclave people's reluctance to join their parent country and he concludes that social and economic, both factors operate in the decision to move to their parent territory or staying in their host country.

After the above discussion, it is evident that women's life experience was not captured in the enclave research. Enclaves remained ungoverned, un-ruled and almost abandoned by their parent states for more than six decades. In such a case it is assumed that women had to face an increased level of difficulties to live in those spaces. The recent engagement of feminist geographers in political geographic works also indicates that women have a different version of sufferings and negotiations because of their gendered positioning. Feminist geographers have criticized traditional political geographical analysis that overshadowed gendered political practices. The

feminist critique of border studies necessitates engaging the missing lens of gender, to understand border and borderland. To understand the difference in political behaviour and production of space, feminists have given importance to understand everyday. Such works also provide an opportunity to include gender-specific research of everyday life on enclaves. Research on everyday life on enclaves by deploying a gender lens can reveal much-hidden information which is unexplored due to the dominance of state-centric or masculintic views on enclave research. Therefore, recognising the knowledge gap and the paucity of literature on women in enclaves, the present study tries to make a modest attempt to bridge the gap by deploying a gender lens in enclave research.

### **1.3 Statement of Problem:**

Enclaves in both sides, India and Bangladesh, had occasionally occupied the headlines of news and media. It had mostly been on the occurrences over security concerns. Otherwise lives in the enclaves are far from the hardness of daily life of the mainland territories of both the countries. Recent scholarships on the border on border studies have opened up the scope to engage with enclave from a new lens. A reflection from recent research reveals the fact that enclave has received attention as a part of recent research agenda on border studies. These have looked at various facets of enclaves in the context of border and borderlands. A critical reflection reveals the fact that the majority of these studies have attempted to understand the enclaves from a macro scale-from the point of view of nation-state. In these studies, aspects like sovereignty and territoriality are being enquired from the strategic and security concerns of both India and Bangladesh state, so state has become the prime lens as well as obsession to deal with such geopolitical peculiarities of enclaves.

Within the recent scholarship, some have taken a new departure from the earlier perspectives, for instance looking beyond the reproduction of the volatile nature of enclaves. Some studies have attempted to look at the everydayness of borderlands. Shewly (2012) studied the everyday life struggle of enclave people with legal oddities. However even though Shewly focused on the lives of enclave people, her treatment of the category of women perhaps evades the very agency of 'Women' in enclaves. The voices of women are missing entirely in her study.

The discussion and conversation with women during the pilot study has led me to reflect on the other side of the borderland. During the interaction, it is found that although women are victims, their lives are also a part of the everyday struggle to contest state-centric practices and ideas of the border. Their lives are intertwined with their struggle to counter the multiplicities of border-Physical and Social. In this sense, border as a material artefact is not devoid of meanings and contestations from below. Recent feminist scholarship has also highlighted and emphasised the very issue of micro understanding of border and borderlands that are mostly ignored in research, for instances, episodes in women life that are entrained differently than their male counterparts (Walter and Staheli 2004; Hyndman and Roberts 2000; Smith et al 2016; Constable 2005). Mobility being an age-old instrument of disciplining bodies (at the micro scale) at the family level has attracted the attention of feminist scholarship (Hyndman 1997, 2004, 2012; Raghuram 2004). More importantly, the peculiarities of enclave life imposed impediments to men and women differently. Such aspects form an interesting facet of research for an interdisciplinary perspective as to how women encounter the multiplicities of border making process in the enclaves.

Therefore, the major objectives of the study are:

1. To explore and capture grass root narratives of everyday life of ordinary people living in the former enclaves of India-Bangladesh border.
2. To examine how borderlands are imagined and negotiated “differently” by women in the former enclaves of India-Bangladesh border.

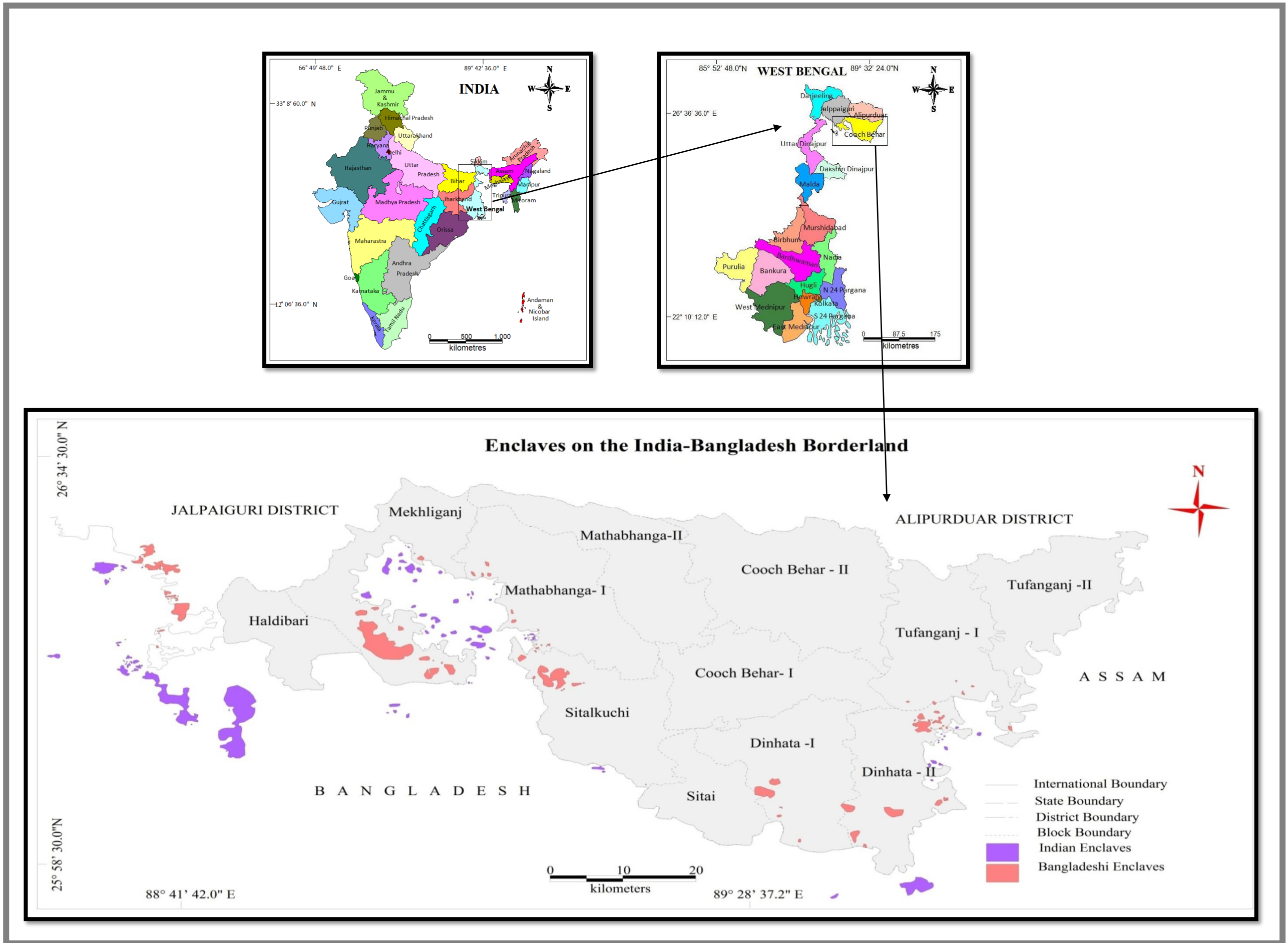
## **1.4 Research Methods and Techniques**

### **1.4.1 Choosing the Field Sites:**

A close view of the location of the former enclaves shows that the India-Bangladesh enclaves are scattered along the Coochbihar district of India and its adjacent border area with Bangladesh (see map 1.1). All the Bangladeshi enclaves are located in Dinhata I and II, Mekhliganj, Sitalkuchi, Mathabhnaga and Tufanjang blocks of Coochbihar district of West Bengal and all the Indian enclaves are located in Panchagarh, Lalmonirhat, Kurigram and Nilphamari districts in Bangladesh. Due to the dispersed nature of the geography of enclaves, these are diverse in cultural composition [for instance religious orientation, ethnicity etc]. Therefore the following criteria are adopted in choosing the enclaves in order to explore the diverse experience of people residing in a peculiar geographical setting. These are as follows-

- a. To explore the intersections of space, religion and other cultural aspects the enclaves have been chosen where Hindu, Muslims and tribal *Oraon* enclave residents are substantial.
- b. Along with socio-cultural aspects, the location and distance of the enclaves from the international boundary line has also been considered. A close introspection reveals that some of the enclaves are too close to the boundary, hence are immensely affected by partition and border making process whereas, the enclaves which are located comparatively far from boundary line are little affected by the boundary-making process.

# Map 1.1 Location Map of India-Bangladesh Enclaves



(Source: Whyte 2002)

The aforesaid criteria have been adopted for selecting enclaves for ethnography and both pilot study. Apart from this, as it was not possible to visit the Indian enclaves therefore, in order to get an idea about the experience of Indian enclave residents several visits are made in the settlement camps in Coochbihar district where many Indian enclave residents are currently residing after the exchange of the enclaves.<sup>3</sup>

However, keeping in mind about the above-stated criteria, two socio-culturally diverse Bangladeshi enclaves are chosen for ethnography; one is Pashchim Bakhalirchora Bangladesh enclave in Dinhata block, and another is Nolgram-fragment Bangladesh enclave in Sitalkuchi block. These two sites are chosen for their cultural diversity and distance from the border. Pashchim Bakhalirchora is mostly a tribal inhabited enclave whereas Nolgram enclave is inhabited by both Hindu and Muslim people. Pashchim Bakhalirchora is very close to the international boundary line whereas Nolgram's major portion is relatively far from the international boundary.

#### **1.4.2 Target Group and Data Source:**

Data have been collected from the enclave residents living in the former enclaves. Respondents have been chosen based on gender, religion, the ethnicity of the selected field sites. The focus has been given to collect data from women, particularly from Hindu, Muslim, and *Oraon* women. However, interaction with male respondents has helped to supplement the data. Respondents are chosen from various age group because people from different age groups help to understand their lived experience in a historical context.

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<sup>3</sup> The settlement camps have been constructed by India to give shelter to the Indian enclave people. The settlement camps are located in Dinhata, Mekhliganj and Haldibari blocks (Block is an administrative unit in India) in West Bengal, India. (see the next chapter)

#### *1.4.2.1 Source of Data:*

Oral narratives of the people are the source of primary data. Oral narratives include the life history of the respondents and oral histories about enclaves. Personal oral narratives help to capture the individual perception of the border in the former enclaves. On the other hand, interaction with respondents of the different socio-cultural group helps to understand their collective perception about border and enclave life.

### **1.4.3 Techniques of Data Collection:**

#### *1.4.3.1 Multi-Sited Ethnography:*

As the main objective is to figure out the day to day activities, major events and emotions of the ordinary women of different groups of people, it is crucial to select the method which can unfold the facets those have been hidden under the layer of state-centric discourses of enclaves. In this study, the aim is to highlight the ordinary actions of the women, the emotion in their everyday life and the dominant aspects in determining the structure of their everyday life. In this study, the focus has been given to explore the micro-level dynamics of enclave lives. Hence, it is very important to choose the method where it enables the researcher to listen to their stories, follow the paths, and understand the emotion which is very connected to their everyday life in that place.

Ethnography is a method which assists the researcher to be involved in the daily activities of the researched and allows the researcher to enter into the emotive and intimate world of them. Ethnography facilitates the researcher to be an insider from an outsider and it entails to comprehend the novelty of the people and the setting and reduces the biases of the researcher. It helps to know the self-regulating behaviour of



the researcher rather than the politically awakened behaviour of the people. As understood, ethnography seeks to understand parts of the world as they are experienced and understood in the everyday lives of the people who actually 'live them out' (Cook & Crang, 1995; cited in Megoran, 2006). It involves the ethnographers participating overtly, covertly in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions in fact, collecting whatever data available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Hammersley and Atkinson 1995). As Herbert (2000) says that a theoretically informed, structurally sensitive ethnography, can uncover how structures are made real in the contexts and commotions of daily life, hence ethnographic methods is imperative for drawing the different shades of everyday life.

In this study ethnography is the best method because ethnographic observations of, and interactions with, others highlight how bodies interact, intermingle, and constitute social spaces, and thereby create inclusions and exclusions (Till 2010). Feminist geographer have mostly emphasised on ethnography to portray the voice of marginalised groups (Dyck 2005). For feminist geographers, ethnography uniquely, despite its positivist roots, permits a long term view, and gives participants a voice, are unobtrusive, gentle, almost passive, and emphasised lived experience (Skeggs, 2001, cited in O'reilly 2005). Feminist supports ethnographic research as it facilitates the discovery of how the everyday contributes to the maintenance of power.

Even political geographers suggests for doing ethnographic research to understand political action for a deep understanding. For example, Megoran (2006) stresses an importance on ethnography in doing research on borderland and he states that ethnography can be a helpful tool for a fuller understanding of geopolitics and

international boundaries. Since the study examines the enclave from the feminist perspective ethnography has all the justifications to be adopted.

With the broader categories of ethnographic research multi-site ethnography is more relevant. As the aim is to find not only the commonalities but also to find the diverse experience of the residents, hence it is necessary to choose several sites for fieldwork. Multi-sited ethnography was propagated mostly by Marcus who gained wider attention in the anthropological study during the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. He (2009) argues that it is the most creative, critical and interesting engaging formal systems and the effects of expert knowledge in their interfaces with ordinary life. In his book, '*Ethnography through thick and thin*' Marcus (1998, cited in Marcus, 2009) argues why some field site should be treated 'thickly' and others 'thinly' in terms of the loci and designs of particular projects.

Multi site ethnography gives a direction to account adequately for the numerous interconnections that fan out across the world hitherto more easily bounded research sites (Robben 2007). As the investigation includes the diverse range of experience in everyday lives with the intersection of culture; therefore single site ethnography is inadequate. Because of the scattered nature of enclave population and people, it is inevitable to select multiple sites to capture the cultural variation of everyday life.

Among the 51 former Bangladeshi enclaves, a total of 16 former Bangladeshi enclaves and 3 settlement camps in 4 blocks of Coochbihar district have been visited. The fieldwork consists of three phases and all the phases are equally important in data collection. The first phase of the fieldwork or pilot study began on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2018 at the Haldibari settlement camp in Haldibari. Followed by the Haldibari settlement camp, further visits are done in Bangladeshi enclaves of Purba Bakhali, Chora,

Pashchim Bakhairchora, Madhya Bakhairchora, Sibprasad Mustafi, Korola, Poaturkuthi, and Dinhata settlement camp during the pilot study (see map. 1.2).

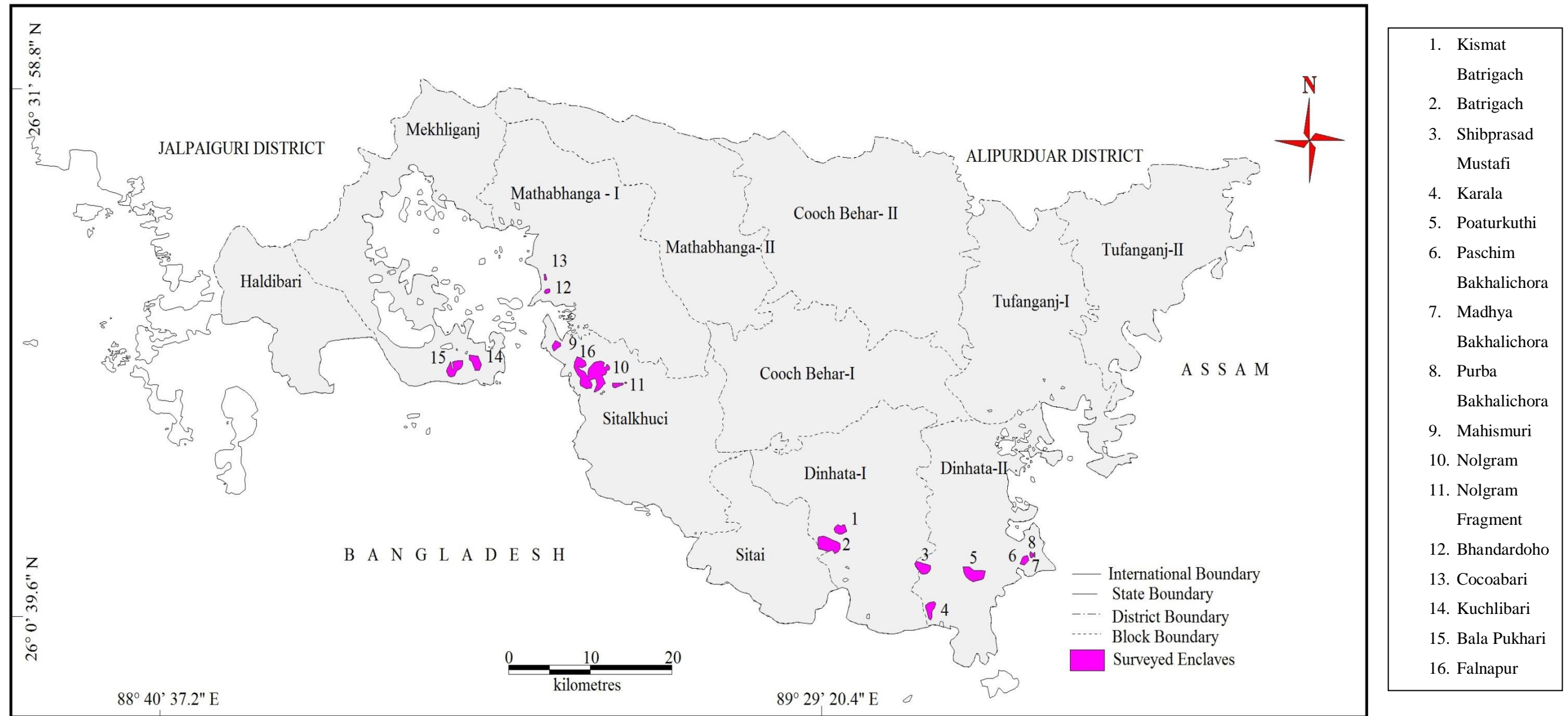
And after doing pilot studies in Dinhata block fieldwork has been conducted in Mathabhanga and Mekhliganj block where Bhandardoho, Cocoabari, Kuchlibari Bangladeshi enclaves and Mekhliganj settlement camp have been explored. In February, another visit is made in Sibprasad Mustafi enclave during a Hindu occasion of *Shivratri*. Thus, the pilot study was crucial in understanding the possibility and the constraints in doing research on women. It has helped to know the settings of the enclaves and political environment of the enclaves as well as helped to choose the enclaves. It has given the idea of how to conduct the fieldwork to unpack the experience of the women and how to give them a voice which was mostly ignored in enclave research.

After finishing the pilot study or 1<sup>st</sup> phase of fieldwork or pilot study, fieldwork has been carried out in Pashchim Bakhairchora, Poaturkuthi, Batrigach, Madnakura counter enclave, Nolgram fragment, Falnapur, Mahismari enclave and Dinhata settlement camp. During this time two days are spent in each enclave and it is carried out in the months of August and September. After that 7days ethnography is conducted in Nolgram and Pashchim Bakhairchora enclave. It is conducted in the last two months of 2018.

#### *1.4.3.2 Participant Observation:*

To understand the structure of everyday life of the women, participant observation has been done. Participant observation is a key method to understand the complex reality of social agency in the marginalised group (Humphrey & Mandel, 2002; cited in Shewly 2012). As the present study tries to explore the complexities of the various

**Map 1.2 Map Showing Surveyed Bangladeshi Enclaves on the India-Bangladesh Borderland**



(Source: Whyte 2002)

sections of marginalised women's life in the enclaves participant observation is adopted. Participant observation is an essential requirement to understand the colours and shades of everyday life in an innate manner. Participant observation is a way to collect data in a naturalistic setting where an ethnographer observes, takes part in the common and uncommon activities of the people being studied (Dewalt & Dewalt, 2011).

Participant observation helps to understand the nuances of life that cannot be visualised only by taking interviews of the participants. In order to understand the various shades of life, the researcher must immerse himself/herself in the naturalistic setting and spontaneously observe their activity. Participant observations helps to do so as the researcher takes part in daily activities, rituals, interaction events of a group of people to learn the tacit and explicit aspects of their daily routines and cultures (ibid). Therefore, participant observation is necessary to understand the impact of enclave specific vulnerabilities and multiplicities of border making process. Participant observation is crucial also because it is useful to trace the transformation in daily life after the exchange of enclaves.

In order to achieve a lucid understanding of their individual and collective life of the women, some days are spent with the people in Nolgram, and Pashchim Bakhalirchora former Bangladesh enclaves. One week is spent in each of these field sites during the period. In order to understand the enclave resident's life, participation has been made in various activities of village life of the former enclaves, which includes attending the social gatherings and involving in the gossiping of the women. The activities during participant observation includes a morning walk in the enclaves, participation in agricultural work, fishing activity, evening *Kirtan*, walking with the women near the fence, meeting their neighbours, watching televisions in the

neighbour's house, cooking food, visiting local markets etc. All the actions have helped to know them intimately during data collection.

#### *1.4.3.3 Interview:*

As the prime concern is to highlight women's everyday life, during ethnography, data has been collected by conducting in-depth interviews. Interviews are essential to understand what role borders and border making processes have played in their life. Interviews have told about their negotiation, resistance that they experienced in their daily life and their embodied experience of being an enclave resident which other methods cannot help to derive the same. The purpose of the interview as a qualitative method is to explore and understand actions within specific settings, to examine human relationships and discover as much as possible about why people feel or act in the ways they do (McDowell 2010). Echoing her it can be said that, interview conversations tell what people perceive about enclave, border and borderland.

Both unstructured and semi-structured interviews have been conducted to elicit information for the study. A specific questionnaire has been used during the interviews, but it has been found that women are more comfortable in informal conversation rather than any other form of interviews. Many times when the interview questionnaire is used, many women felt uncomfortable and some were suspicious seeing the papers on my hand, especially the Muslim women. It is also found that a range of women's emotions was emerging from informal conversation. Therefore the focus was on unstructured interviews to keep the environment friendly and acceptable for the women. A total of 99 interviews have been conducted during fieldwork. And, the interviews were 1-2.30 hours long which revealed several aspects of their life. During Interviews, conversation has been carried out in the Bengali. Both women

and men have been interviewed although major respondents are women. Women and men from different age groups are interviewed. The women in the age groups are from 15-100 years old. Similarly, many male enclave dwellers are from 25-70 years age group have been interviewed.

**Table 1.1 No. of In-Depth Interviews Conducted During Fieldwork (Including Pilot Study)**

Name of the enclave/settlement camp	Hindu		Muslim		Tribal Oraon		Total
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	
PashchimBakhalirchora	2	1	-	-	10	6	19
PurbaBakhalirchora	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
Madhya Bakhalirchora	-	-	-	2	-	-	2
Poaturkuthi	2	2	1	1	-	-	6
Sibprasad Mustafi	3	1	-	-	-	-	4
Karala	2	2	2	2	-	-	8
Kuchlibari	1	1	-	-	-	-	2
Batrigach	-	-	4	2	-	-	6
Kismat Batrigach	1	2	-	-	-	-	3
Cocoabari	2	2	-	-	-	-	4
Bhandardoho	2	1	-	-	-	-	3
Nolgram	11	3	7	2	-	-	23
Falnapur	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
Dinhata Settlement camp	2	1	2	2	-	-	7
Mekhliganj settlement camp	2	2	-	-	-	-	4
Haldibari settlement camp	2	2	-	-	-	-	4
Total	34	22	16	11	10	6	99

#### **1.4.4 Data Analysis and Representation:**

After data collection, all the recorded data has been transcribed into English. During transcription, it is kept in mind to note down their tone and their emotional engagement with the particular conversation. All the transcription and written notes are carefully examined and later produced in the dissertation.

Narrative approach has been designed to understand the meaning of interview talk in the work. Wiles et al (2005) argues that narrative analysis is a form interpreting a conversation or story in which attention is paid to the embedded meanings and evaluations of the speaker and their context. Scholars have argued that narratives analysis is the most suitable way to analyse qualitative data. An increasingly favoured

research strategy has been the collection of personal narratives, or life-histories, which have proven particularly useful in exposing the otherwise "hidden" experiences of marginalized groups (Miles 1993). In the work, narrative analysis is important because it helps to depict the different facets of everyday life of the women of enclaves.<sup>4</sup>

### **1.5 Chapter Scheme:**

The thesis is devoted to the construction of women's lives in the sensitive borderland space of the former India-Bangladesh enclaves. The study intends to peel off the different layers of women's lives and show how women have struggled to live inside those lands. Therefore, the following study discusses the various issues in detail. The whole discussion is split into 6 chapters, all of which are intermingled with each other.

**Chapter 1** gives an idea about the study which includes the background of the research, literature review, research problem, objectives, and research techniques. This chapter starts with giving an idea about the study followed by a review of relevant literature, research problem and objectives. All the techniques of data collection are described here. The chapter also provides an insight as to how the chapters in the dissertation are written.

**Chapter 2** provides a broad description of the study area i.e. enclave. Important aspects regarding about enclaves are discussed here in detail including its definition and types. Then it continues by giving a description of India-Bangladesh enclaves.

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<sup>4</sup> Keeping in mind about ethical issues, during the use or representation of the narratives in the study, the names of the respondents are changed in order to hide their actual identity. Sometimes, the names of the enclaves are also omitted due to the sensitivity of the topic.



This chapter mostly gives general information about India Bangladesh enclaves where the typicality of India Bangladesh enclaves are discussed. This includes a historical overview of enclaves, enclave residents and the present status of the enclave.

**Chapter 3** discusses about everyday life in the enclave. The discussion in this chapter is written based on the first objective of the study. The chapter helps to provide an image of enclave life so that the nuances can be easily portrayed in the following chapter. It gives an idea of social, political and economic life in the enclaves. It also discusses the multiplicity of borders. It tries to give an idea about the transformative aspects of everyday life in enclaves.

**Chapter 4** is a broad description of the everyday living of enclave particularly focusing on women. Throughout this chapter, various types of emotion in women's lives are empirically explored. Here violence, exclusion and fear of violence are explored by which it shows the gender difference in everyday life. It shows that women being a gendered subject as well as positioned in the patriarchal structure are subjected to a different version of bordering and negotiation. The chapter also elucidates how differently a woman inside an enclave discovered the typicality of enclave by marriage migration in their everyday living. It shows the way marriage makes women's life subordinate by marriage migration, and at the same time, a way out from socio-political political subordination. It argues that woman as a gendered subject, negotiate multiple boundaries which are reflected at the time of marriage of the women of enclaves with the host country's citizens.

**Chapter 5**, traces the methodological issues related to the dissertation. This chapter includes various problems about carrying out research in the sensitive space of

enclave. The discussion provides a reflection of the researcher during research which is inevitable for feminist researches for ascertaining a meaningful discourse

**Chapter 6** is the concluding chapter which remarks on the research findings. It highlights the arguments of the work. After interrogating about the everyday life of women, it concludes and comments on the structure of the life of women in the enclaves.

## Chapter 2

### Introducing the India Bangladesh Enclaves: Exploring the Past and the Present

#### 2.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to give an account of the study area of India-Bangladesh enclave. The enclaves have been studied are one of the most peculiar geo-political lands in the world. So, an attempt has been made to give a detailed understanding of the term 'enclave' and India-Bangladesh enclaves. This chapter provides basic information about the study area. The chapter starts with a brief discussion on enclave including its definition, theory, types, etc. It provides a detail discussion on India-Bangladesh enclave comprising the history of its origin, transformation and present status of the enclaves. It also provides a description of enclave population and their cultural tradition.

#### 2.2 Enclaves and Ambiguous Geography:

##### 2.2.1 Defining Enclaves:

Enclaves as implicit phenomena exist in the history of humankind from the very early period. Vinokuruv (2007, cited in Shewly 2012) suggests that 'The Treaty of Madrid of 1526' explicitly contained the term enclave. He reveals that "the term 'en-clave' entered the language of diplomacy rather late in English, in 1868, coming from French, the lingua franca of diplomacy, with a sense derived from the late Latin *inclavatus* meaning 'shut in, locked up' and *clavis* meaning a 'key' (ibid). The word enclave and exclave can be found in a few European languages like French (enclave, exclave), German (enklave & exklave), Swedish (enclav & exclav) (Whyte 2002). While exclave is a portion of the territory of an independent country separated by the

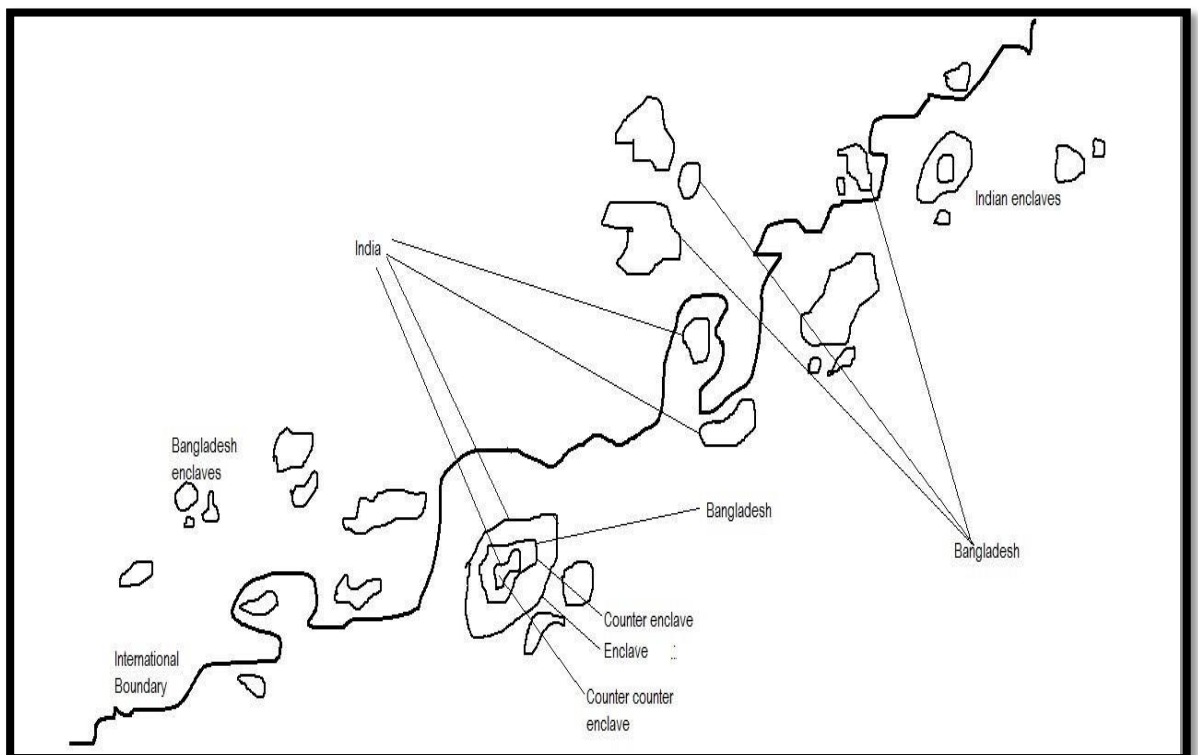
territories of another state/s, an enclave is part of territory entirely surrounded by foreign countries. The Oxford English Dictionary (1989, cited in Whyte 2002 p.2) termed “enclave as a portion of territory entirely surrounded by foreign dominion”.

The Dictionary of Human Geography (2009) mentioned an enclave to be a piece of territory that is culturally distinct and politically separate from another territory within which it is located. Exclave is a small piece of a state that is physically separate from its main territorial body but remains within its political jurisdiction despite being surrounded by the territory of another state (ibid). Robinson (1959) states that an exclave is a part of a country which is entirely surrounded by another country. Catudal (1974a; cited in Whyte 2002) have emphasised on two parts-a. part of one territory and b. completely surrounded by one state for defining the term enclave.

In both enclaves and exclaves, the territories are surrounded by foreign countries. The definitions seem quite similar to each other which may create ambiguity. It can be illustrated clearly by an example such as- fragments of Indian territories in Bangladesh are exclaves but fragments of Bangladeshi territories in India are enclaves. As, India is enclaving Bangladesh's territory entirely; hence Bangladesh's territories are enclaves in India. Again Bangladeshi lands in India are exclaves for Bangladesh. However, in the present context, only the 'enclave' term has been used to denote fragments of foreign territories. To avoid any ambiguity and confusion the term exclave is eliminated. Similar to the other scholars (Whyte 2002; Jones 2009; Cons 2011, 2013; Schendel 2002; Shewly 2012, 2013, 2017; Ferdous, 2018, 2019) [and as per Ministry of External Affairs, India] Indian exclaves have been termed as Indian enclaves and Bangladeshi exclaves have been termed as Bangladeshi enclaves.

Besides these, there is some other typicality associated with enclaves. These are counter-enclaves, counter-counter enclaves, enclave complex, and compound enclave. Counter-enclave is another enclave within an enclave, for example, *chit* Madnakura is a counter-enclave which lies within the Bangladeshi enclave of Batrigach in India. Counter-counter-enclave is again a different enclave within the counter-enclave, for example, Dohola Khagrabari is an Indian enclave surrounded by a Bangladeshi enclave, and the Bangladeshi enclave is surrounded by an Indian enclave which was by surrounded by Bangladesh. The following diagram is an illustration of enclaves, counter enclave and counter-counter enclaves by employing the idea of India-Bangladesh enclaves.

**Diagram 2.1 Diagrammatic Representations of Enclave, Counter-Enclave, and Counter-Counter-Enclave**



Apart from the above terminology, few other terms are associated with the enclave. These are complex enclave and composite enclave. A group of enclaves forming an

administrative unit is termed as enclave complex (for example, Barle & Shalbari enclave complex) and individual enclaves composed of several administrative units are called as composite enclave (Whyte 2002).

### **2.2.2 Theory and Types of Enclave:**

Although it seems an unimaginable thing to provide a theory of enclaves but some scholars have stressed on the need of a theory of enclaves. Lunden (2012) has written about the need for producing a theory of enclave. According to him, enclave's general theory should include the causality of enclave existence and maintenance. He has stressed on generic theory, functional theory, and socio-demographical theory. In generic or historical theory he talks about the various conditions that led to the formation of exclaves. In generic theory, he states that there are three phases of development of exclaves-

- a. Transformation of feudalism into the territorial state in the period of 1500-1815
- b. Independence of former colonial states in the period of 1945-2002 [example, India-Bangladesh enclaves]
- c. Breaking up of federal states into independent states in 1990 [such as Kaliningrad, Dubrovnik enclaves, etc]

In functional theory, he urged to investigate how states attempt to homogenise their own lands by forming an integrated territorial economy. On the other side in socio-demographic theory, he urged to inquire the social aspects of enclave dwellers in order to understand the deviance in socio-cultural and demographic aspects in the life of enclave/exclave dwellers.

Although scholars have not emphasised much on the categories of enclaves Robinson (1959) identified few types of exclaves such as-

- a. Pene enclaves are parts of a country that is approachable on wheeled traffic through the territory of another country. Pene enclaves can be connected to their home countries by constructing special roads or tunnels.
- b. Quasi exclaves which do not function as exclaves today,
- c. Temporary exclaves are the result of a truce and leave islands of one zone in another and,
- d. Virtual exclaves are which parts is not the strictest sense an integral part.

In his book entitled “*A theory of Enclave*” Vinokourov (2007; cited in Shewly 2012) have tried to provide a detail discussion on enclaves and enclave like geopolitical outliers. But unlike the name suggests it lacks a general theory of enclave. However, his work on enclaves gives a direction to the various terms associated with the enclave. Vinokuruv mentioned a few terms related to enclaves, such as 1. *Maritime* or *Lacustrine* enclaves, 2. *Semi-enclave* or *coastal enclaves* as a part of a state enclosed within the land territory of another state, yet in possession of a sea border, 3. *Pene-enclaves* are those which are not separated from the mainland and are practically accessible only through the territory of another state and 4. *Mere exclaves* are surrounded by more than one state and are not enclaves in relation to other states but merely exclaves in relation to the mainland (ibid). However, Vinokuruv's work is mostly an extended version of Robinson's work in the enclave.

The above discussion reveals that there is no particular theory which can be accepted in enclave research. Scholars have realised the necessities of theories in the literature of enclaves, but the limited works on enclave make it inappropriate to justify it. The

categories of enclave can be accepted in the works of enclave although much works are needed for a rich understanding.

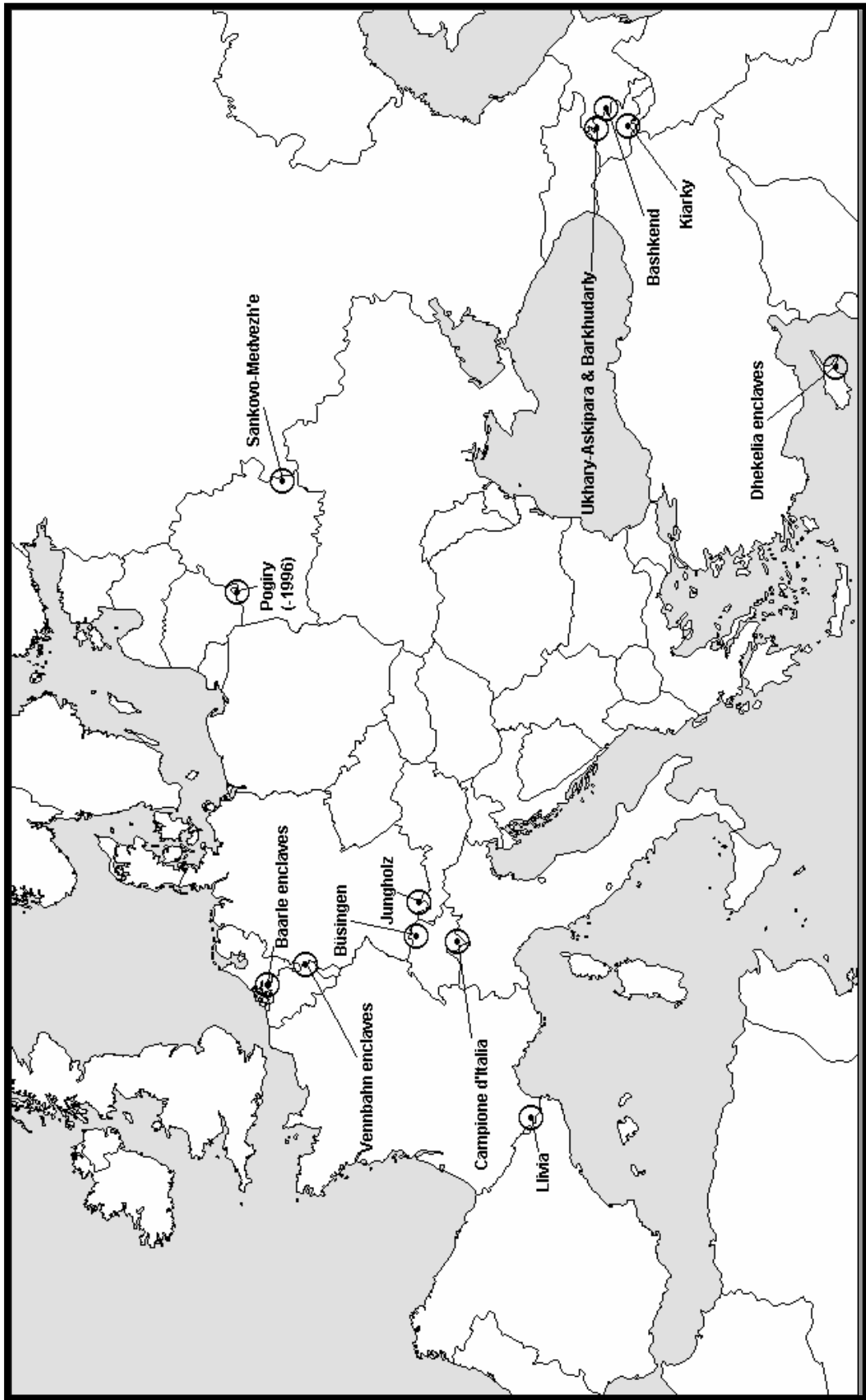
### **2.2.3 Distribution of World Enclaves:**

According to Whyte (2002), there are 223 enclaves, 32 counter enclaves and one counter-counter enclave existed in the world [since 1996]. All the enclaves are located in West Europe, former USSR and Asia. There are 32 enclaves and 7 counter enclaves located in West Europe. The West European enclaves are located in Germany, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain, France, Italy, and Austria. Former USSR consists 13 enclaves and these are located in Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Kirgizia, Kirghizstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

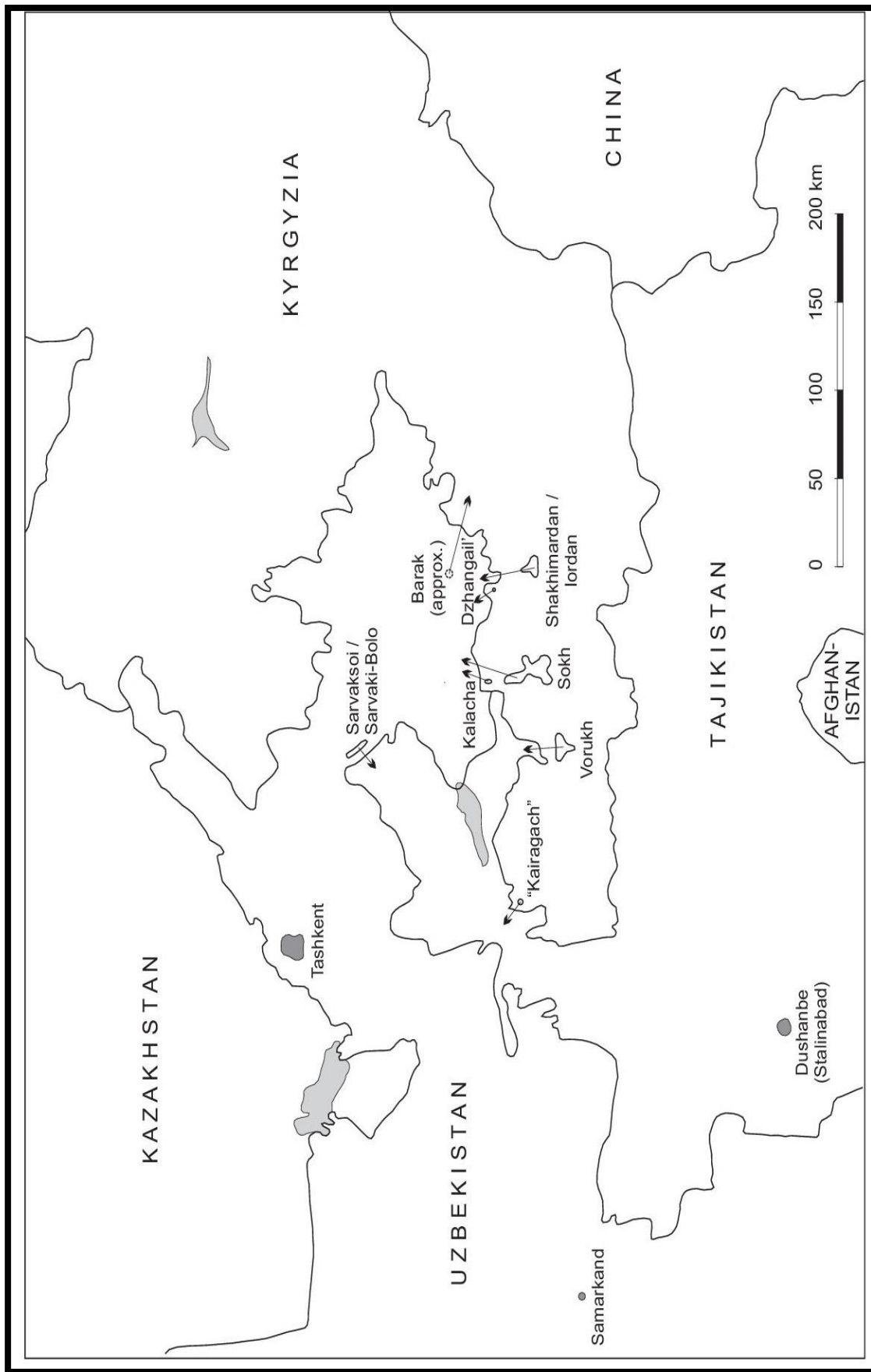
Among the world enclaves, Asia has the largest numbers of enclaves. Among Asian countries, enclaves are located in Cyprus, Oman, UAE, India and Bangladesh. Central Asia consists eight enclaves and these are located in Kirghizstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Among the world enclaves 178 enclaves, 25 counter enclaves, and the single counter-counter enclave inherited India and Bangladesh Borderlands.

Among the world enclaves, Baarle is the most complex enclave zone in the world and Sokh is the largest enclave in the world. Sokh covers an area of 236 sq km. Although Coochbihar enclaves or India Bangladesh borderland has the largest numbers of enclaves but the total area of Sokh is larger than the area of Coochbihar enclave. It is an enclave of Uzbekistan and enclaved by or surrounded by Kirghizstan. Majority of the population of this enclave are Tajik people. The following maps (map. 2.1, 2.2, & 2.3) show the world distribution of enclaves.

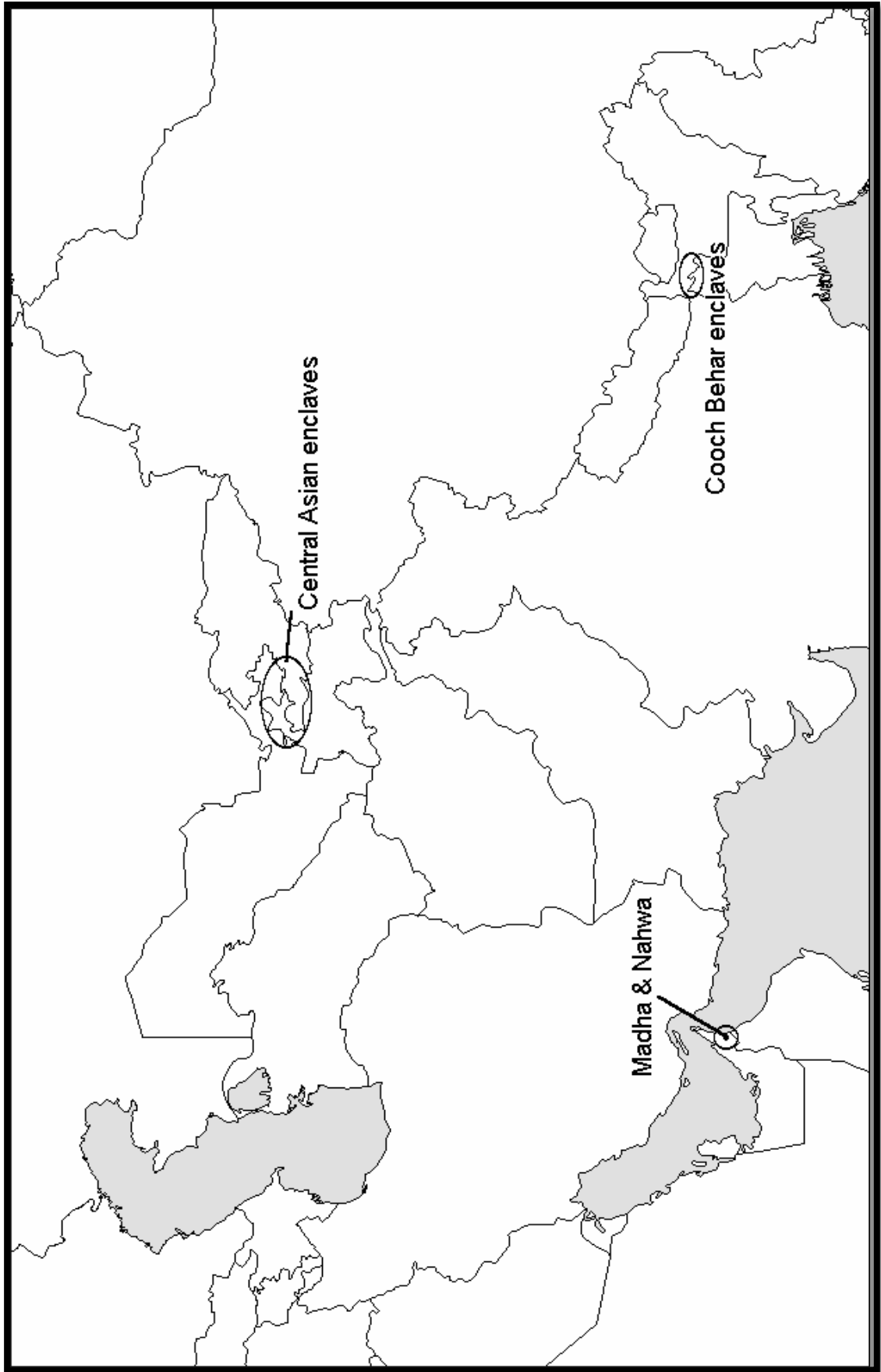




Map. 2.1 Enclaves in Europe Since 1991 (Source: Whyte 2002 , p. 453)



**Map. 2.2 Enclaves in Central Asia Since 1991 (Source: Whyte 2002, p.455)**



Map. 2.3 Enclaves in Asia Since 1991 (Source: Whyte 2002 p.454)

## **2.3 Evolution of India Bangladesh Enclaves:**

This section provides a historical overview of India-Bangladesh enclaves including its typical characteristics. It provides a genealogy of India-Bangladesh border enclaves and those have acquired the peculiar character they exhibit.

### **2.3.1 State Formation of India-Bangladesh Enclaves:**

The historical evolution of the enclaves can be traced back to the medieval Bengal. Many of the historical legends and stories sources can be traced to this political dynamism rooted in 18<sup>th</sup> century Bengal. Folktale suggests that enclaves are the result of the gambling habits of the then rulers of Coochbihar but the actual reason lies in the feudal system of administration (Jones 2009). In the precolonial era, the feudal system has prevailed in most of the parts of South Asia.

Similarly, the province of Bengal was administrated under the feudal system by the kings of the regions. When Mughal came to India, they started to spread their kingdom into different parts of India. The province of Bengal was ruled both by Mughal and local kings. As Mughal tried to expand their domain they came to the Northern Bengal to conquer it including Coochbihar. The kingdom of Coochbihar was ruled by the Koch king of Coochbihar. The Mughal fought with the Koch kings and they conquered one-third of their kingdom. The Mughals were unable to dislodge all the territories because of the strong possession by some of the chieftain of Coochbihar (Whyte 2002). However, the Koch king wanted to regain his territories which were annexed by Mughals, which led to the formation of another war.

A peace treaty was signed in 1713 that created the enclaves of this region. By this treaty, the Maharajas or the kings could collect taxes from his small villages under

Mughal domain and Mughal could collect tax from his landholding under Coochbihar's domain. Thus the villages of Coochbihar become enclaved by Mughal territory and Mughal villages become surrounded by Coochbihar's territory. However, this did not pose any problem in the everyday life of the villagers.

Later the British arrived and started defeating the Mughal rulers. The British claimed the Mughal lands. The British also conquered Coochbihar but did not want to rule it directly. In this way, Coochbihar became a princely state. Consequently, all the lands of Coochbihar including the enclaves within Mughal territory remained under Koch king. The boundaries between Coochbihar and the British Empire were finally surveyed in 1930, based on the maximisation of tax revenues. Thus, the complexities of the enclave's territorial character were reproduced by the colonial power in order to ensure their economic profits.

In 1937, when British India was partitioned the princely states are not divided. Only the directly ruled states under British India are partitioned. The princely states remained the same but they were encouraged to join either India or Pakistan<sup>5</sup>. As India and Pakistan were partitioned based on religious majority; Coochbihar with a Hindu majority of 61.6% of the population joined India two years after partition. All the Coochbihar's enclaves are scattered in between Dinajpur and Rangpur. Rangpur district completely had gone to East Pakistan because of its Muslim Majority. Dinajpur was divided between India and East Pakistan. Consequently, Coochbihar's lands inside Rangpur and Dinajpur become Indian territory surrounded by Pakistan and; Rangpur's lands inside India become Pakistan's territory surrounded by India. So

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<sup>5</sup> Princely states are native states of Indian Subcontinent during the British period. These are semi-sovereign in character and indirectly ruled by the British but directly ruled by local kings.

the partition deepened the arbitrary division of territories based on the religious criteria creating the birth of a hallucinating geography the enclaves reflect.

With the birth of India and Pakistan, the enclaves got the status of the international enclave. Later, Exchange of lands was demanded as it can end the territorial dispute over a short period of time but it could not happen quickly because of the hostile relationship between India and Pakistan. A war broke out in Kashmir in 1948 which led to severe deterioration of the relationship. In 1950 a negotiation was done which allowed government officials to enter to the enclaves with proper and prior arrangements (Whyte 2002). The enclave residents did not face any problems regarding a free movement into their parent state but the introduction of visa in 1952 by Pakistan complicated enclave resident's life (ibid). An exchange could bring relief from the territorial altercation but irreconcilable relation between the two newborn nation states never made it possible. Besides, the brevity of the partition document and the short time taken in its preparation do not completely explain the existence of so many enclaves in India and East Pakistan which further complicated the solution of the enclave problem (Karan 1966).

However, realising the complex situation both the countries desired for exchange but negotiations stalled on the compensation of net loss of West Bengal. To address border disputes related to West Bengal, Assam, and Tripura '*The Nehru-Noon Agreement on India-East Pakistan Border*'<sup>6</sup> was signed in New Delhi on September 10, 1958, which included also the issue of enclaves. While dealing with the boundary issues in Lok Sabha, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, gave a statement on the enclaves after the signing of the Agreement, stating that, "In regard to exchange of small territories

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<sup>6</sup> In 1958 Prime ministers of India and Pakistan-Jawaharlal Nehru and Malik Firoz Khan Noon signed an agreement which proposed for a clearly recognisable boundary and to resolve the boundary disputes including the enclave issues.

we don't want migration from them, as far as possible, and we advise the people to continue living there and accept the country to which they will now belong”(Jamwal 2004 p.7). The legislation was passed in 1960 in parliament but it was opposed in West Bengal and stalled the implementation of the agreement for ten years (Whyte 2002). There are several reasons for such a delay in the exchange. First of all, the area of Indian territories in Bangladesh was almost double than the area of Bangladesh's territory inside India. Hence an exchange could result in loss of area for India. Another reason was the dispute of the Berubari union. The Partition award states that Berubari union falls into India but the map shows it in East Pakistan. As it was located in the same area as enclaves, it further complicated the process (Jones 2010).

Later, the creation of Bangladesh 1971 and the political circumstances added another layer of complexities. Now it was no more an affair of India-Pakistan rather it became the affair of India and Bangladesh. The relation between India and the newly born state was cordial initially and efforts to solve boundary disputes were taken. In 1974, the Indira-Mujib Treaty was signed but was not ratified. The 1974 treaty was identical to the 1958 agreement but the whole Berubari was to be given to India. Instead of many efforts, the enclave exchange was not possible in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It took many years to ratify the treaty by India.

### **2.3.2 Recent Developments:**

In 2010 during the visit of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina of Bangladesh to India both of the countries expressed the desire to reach a final resolution to the long-standing enclave problem and they agreed to comprehensively address all outstanding boundary issues keeping in view the spirit of the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement. Subsequently joint visits and land surveys are undertaken in September 2011 (India

Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement 2015). And finally, with the visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in June 2015, the enclaves were transferred in July. On 31<sup>st</sup> of July in the exchange of enclaves, India had transferred 111 enclaves with a total area of 17,160.63 acres to Bangladesh while Bangladesh had transferred 51 enclaves with an area of 7,110.02 acres to India (India Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement 2015).

The 4<sup>th</sup> Joint Boundary Working Group of India and Bangladesh had decided for a head count of the people living in the Bangladeshi and Indian enclaves. According to that Joint surveys are conducted by both India and Bangladesh under the instruction of Ministry of External Affairs. It reveals that 51549 persons live in Indian and Bangladeshi enclaves combined together. Among 51549 enclave residents, 37334 residents live in 111 Indian Enclaves within Bangladesh and 14215 residents live in 51 Bangladesh Enclaves within India. The people of all the enclaves of both countries are given the option to choose citizenship of any of the two countries<sup>7</sup>. Whereas 987 residents from different Indian enclaves have come to mainland India but not a single person has gone to Bangladesh. The migrants are living in the three settlement camps.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Land Boundary agreement of 1974 was ratified in order to solve the boundary disputes between India and Bangladesh. Article 1(12) of LBA 1974 states the enclaves should be exchanged and in accordance with the treaty, the 162 enclaves are exchanged. However Bangladeshi enclave Angorpota and Dohogram are not exchanged and India also retained Berubari.

<sup>8</sup> In the settlement camp, every family has been provided with 2 rooms but it varies depending on the numbers of the family member. The rooms in all the settlement camps are made up of Tins. The floor is cemented but the walls and roof are made of Tin. All the rooms or individual dwellings look identical in the three camps. Now, the people are sheltered inside the camps but India has assured them to provide 1flat to each of the family. The flats are now under construction and are located in the same blocks where the camps are constructed.



**Fig 2.1: Mekhliganj Settlement Camp**



**(Source: Primary Survey)**

**Fig 2.2: Indian residents came from Indian Enclaves after the exchange of enclaves**



**(Source: Primary Survey)**

Among those, Haldibari and Mekhliganj camps are wholly inhabited by Hindu people whereas, Dinhata camp is an exception of having both Hindu and Muslims.

**Table no. 2.1 Former Enclave residents who migrated to their Parent State after the Exchange of Enclaves**

Name of the Settlement camps	Place of origin (Indian enclaves)	Religious groups	Persons
Dinhata	Dashiarchora, Choto Garaljhora	Hindus, Muslims	305
Haldibari	kotbhajni, Balapara Kagrabari, Natoktoko, Beludanga, Kajoldighi, Najirgonj, Garati, Daikhata, Garati, Dohola Khagrabari	Hindu	487
Mekhliganj	from Lotamari, Gotamari, khorkhoria, Bashkata	Hindu	195

**Source: Office of Sub-divisional Officer, Coochbihar, West Bengal, India**

### **2.3.3 Ambiguity of Numbers of Enclave and Population:**

There is no doubt that the enclaves have persisted since the Mughal period but ambiguities are present regarding the actual numbers of the enclaves. Whyte (2002) mentions in his thesis that there were 106 Indian enclaves and 92 Bangladesh enclaves existed in the Bengal Borderlands. Jones (2009) also supports this account, but Karan (1966) has mentioned that there were 130 enclaves in East Pakistan and 93 enclaves in India. Schendel (2002) has given another account of 123 Indian enclaves in Bangladesh and 74 Bangladeshi enclaves in India. Apart from academic work, there are some other works on India-Bangladesh enclaves which give another account of numbers of the enclave. For instance, Shib Shankar Chatterjee (2011), a journalist who has worked on enclaves, gave an account on enclaves (see Annexure 2.1 and 2.2).

On the other hand, Government officials are always reluctant to reveal information relating to enclaves. In the published reports it is stated that “In the exchange of enclaves, India will transfer 111 enclaves with a total area of 17,160.63 acres to Bangladesh, while Bangladesh would transfer 51 enclaves with an area of 7,110.02

acres to India" (India Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement 2015). The enclaves which were exchanged with each other are mentioned as an exchangeable enclave (see annexure 2.3 and 2.4). Therefore it creates ambiguity as which enclaves are not exchangeable. Above all, it is unclear as what criteria have been adopted by the countries to categorise enclave lands. However, the largest enclave of Angorpotadohogram is not transferred to India because of its larger size and unwillingness of the residents to be merged with Indian territory. After the merging of the India-Bangladesh enclaves, it can be said that currently, around 20% of enclaves exist in the world.

Enclave territories are not only ambiguous from the lens of the state but its people also don't conform to the neat and tidy classification of the so-called 'population' of the state. As the only census was conducted in the 20<sup>th</sup> century is 1951, so there is no data available for early decades. However, in 2011 a joint survey was conducted. According to the survey of 2011, there are 51590 residents live in Indian enclaves and Bangladeshi enclaves combined together. Among which, 14221 residents live in former Bangladeshi enclaves and 37369 live in former Indian enclaves in Bangladesh.

These former enclaves are populated mainly by Hindu Rajbanshi, Hindu Bengali, Bengali Muslim and tribal *Oraon* people (see fig 2.3). Most of them speak in Bengali and Rajbanshi but their accent shows a rural mixture. The language of the Hindus is the mixture of Rajbanshi and Bengali. The Muslims speak in Bengali with a rural accent and the tribal *Oraons* use both Kurukh and Bengali languages.

People of enclaves are mostly engaged in agricultural activity (see fig 2.4). Besides agriculture, many of them work as a labourer in brick kiln factories and construction workers in different parts of their surrounding countryside.

**Fig 2.3: Hindu, Tribal and Muslim residents of former Bangladeshi enclave**



**(Source: Primary Survey)**

**Fig 2.4: Enclave residents are busy in agricultural activity**



**(Source: Primary Survey)**

**Table 2.2 Distribution of Indian enclaves and population**

District	No. of Enclaves	Area	Population		No. Of families
			Male	Female	
Panchagarh	36	11932.78	9755	9101	3830
Nilfamari	4	108.48	258	248	119
Lalmोनिरহাট	59	3238.72	4968	4704	2070
Kurigram	12	1880.65	4358	3942	396

( Source: Source: Office of Sub-divisional Officer, Coochbihar, West Bengal, India)

**Table 2.3 Distribution of Bangladeshi enclaves and population**

District	Sub-Division	No. of enclaves	Area	Population		No. Of families
				Male	Female	
Coochbihar	Mekhliganj	11	1205.47	449	416	197
	Mathabhanga	18	2395.00	1493	1539	615
	Dinhata	19	3355.73	5328	4975	2538
	Tufanganj	03	153.82	5	10	5

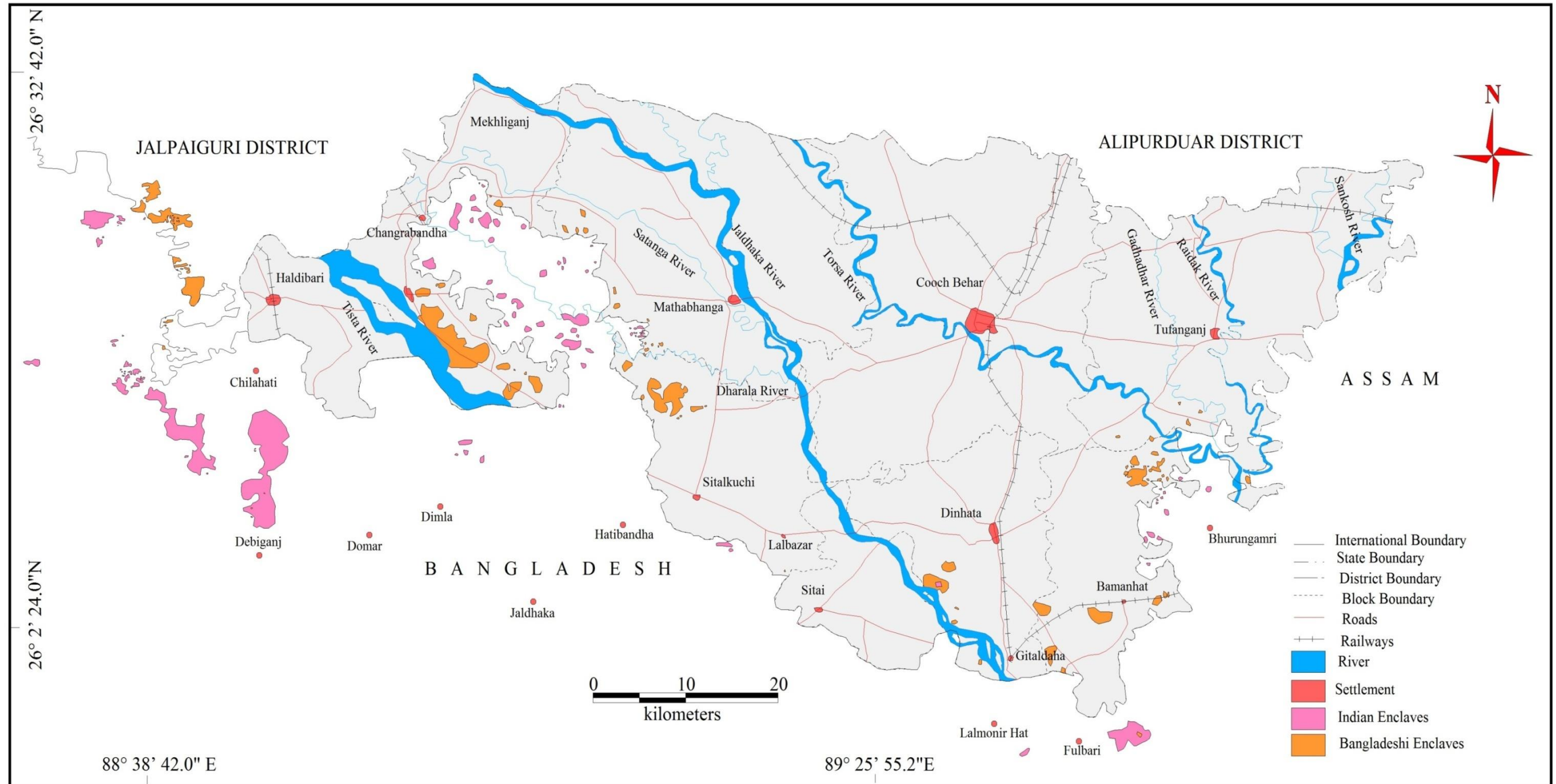
Source: Office of Sub-divisional Officer, Coochbihar, West Bengal, India

#### **2.4 India-Bangladesh Enclaves on the Map and on the Ground:**

The enclaves in the local language are known as *Chitmohol* or *Sitmohol*. The word ‘Chit’ denotes to fragments or portions of a thing and ‘Mohol’ denotes to Land. The enclaves on the map look like floating Islands. Even these lands were such pockets of land that they were never represented by the map of any country as if they did never exist (Jones 2009). On the ground, they look identical to the other borderland village of West Bengal and Bangladesh borderland. These enclaves are like a rural village in India or Bangladesh with similar physical characteristics such as- paddy fields, stagnant water bodies, narrow earthen paths, etc.

These pockets of land are surrounded by the lands of their host land. The international boundary line between India and Bangladesh separates these land from their home/parent country. These enclaves are separated by the fence from the home country but there was no wall or fence to separate it from the host country.

## Map 2.4 India-Bangladesh Enclaves on Map



(Source: Whyte 2002)

**Fig 2.5: The concrete pillar above which the hen is standing acted as a boundary between Indian territory and former Bangladesh enclave's territory, Dinhata, India**



**(Source: Primary Survey)**

**Fig 2.6: Road separating former Bangladesh land and Indian land, Sitalkunchi, India**



**(Source: Primary Survey)**

The enclaves are separated by enclave-host country boundary line which was demarcated in 1934 by some concrete pillars between British India and Coochbihar (Schendel 2002). These concrete pillars were the only markers that divided the host countries territory and the enclave's territory. These pillars are still present in a place but on its last legs. Some of these are uprooted and some are buried under the earth by the former enclave dwellers (See fig 2.7).

**Fig 2.7: Woman on the left side is the resident of former Bangladeshi enclave Batrigach; Woman on the right side is a resident of counter [Indian] enclave Madnakura. The triangle shape showing a pillar marker that was uprooted many years ago as it caused a problem to everyday activity**



(Source: Primary Survey)



## **2.5 Conclusion:**

The discussion in this chapter provides an idea about enclaves. It provides important insights on India-Bangladesh enclave. It shows that enclaves are the result of colonisation and de-colonisation process. The Coochbihar borderland has experienced several events and the place has also changed according to its tune. After the creation of the enclaves, these have undergone several modifications which is inherent characteristics of India-Bangladesh enclaves. It also shows that there is some ambiguity regarding the number of enclaves which creates problems to provide actual information about India-Bangladesh enclaves.

## Chapter 3

### **‘Chiter Jibon’: Capturing Everyday life of Communities in the Enclaves**

#### **3.1 Introduction:**

This chapter is an investigation of the very ordinary life of enclave dwellers to comprehend how everyday life is evolved and got shaped by politics and state formation. In order to do so, grass root narratives of enclaves have been provided. The chapter tries to understand how daily life was lead in the sensitive space of enclave. As the enclave residents remained as stateless and lived their life as other than the citizen of India and Bangladesh so, it is very important to understand what way they have sustained themselves inside the enclaves. Here, statelessness denotes to de facto statelessness of the enclave dwellers.

The term of statelessness is often used in the studies of the lives of refugee and asylum- seeker in war and conflict. According to UNHCR (2006, cited in Shewly 2017 p.111), a stateless person is ‘who, under national laws do[es] not enjoy citizenship—the legal bond between a state and an individual—with any country’. According to Arendt (1951; cited in Shewly 2017 p. 112), "the stateless person has lost the protection of their government". Furthermore, there can be two cases of statelessness-a. de jure statelessness and b.de facto statelessness. Where in de jure case, people can claim certain rights under international law if their country of origin signs the convention, and in de facto statelessness an individual or group of people are unable to get protection from the laws attached to their nationality (Shewly 2017).

Arendt (1951; cited in Shewly 2017) argues that rightlessness is statelessness, so the study takes the rightlessness of the enclave dwellers as statelessness and then it

examines the impact of such de facto statelessness condition, abandonment of states and local and national politics in their daily lives of this former enclave people. The first portion starts with a glimpse of the various hitches in daily life before the birth of Bangladesh. Then it describes the changes in everyday life with the exchange of enclaves.

### **3.2 Life in the *Chitmohols*:**

Enclaves are not merely zones of ‘delimitation’ and ‘containment’ but also of ‘contact’ where the culture and people overlap and intermingle together to create a diverse and multi-layered social and economic realities. So, the chapter provides a detail description of lives in the enclaves. It elucidates the various facets of everyday life contouring with exploitation, expropriation, and vulnerabilities. These multiple aspects of daily life are essential to understand the role of local and national politics, territoriality and bordering in the borderland enclave resident. Here, life in the enclave is referred to as *Chiter jibon*. Here, an attempt has been made to refer the own words of enclave dweller in the understanding of chit or enclave life. It is crucial to frame their own words, perception, and experience in their way of knowing about everyday life in the enclave.

#### **3.2.1 Daily Life and Land-lockedness:**

In 1947 with the creation of India and Pakistan, the resident who was adversely affected, were living at the edge of each other's territory-the enclave resident. With the increasing hostility between these two power elites, the exact location of the borders became a point of contestation. The hostility and contestation between these two countries were increased gradually up to 1970 and affected the life of the resident

who was living in the enclaves of this borderland. The former enclaves are located in this highly sensitive borderland and since the creation of these modern enclaves, the fate of the enclave resident was tied up with the antagonistic relationships between the two states (Schendel 2002). But things never had been so tough for the enclave dwellers until the two states started imposing their control over these enclaves.

Whenever the relationship between India and Pakistan degraded, its impact came upon the borderland resident. The enclave residents are the most sufferer of this. As the enclaves had become trapped inside the territories of their unfriendly neighbours, the communication of the enclave resident with their home country gradually declined. Few attempts have been made in the early post-partition days to connect with the enclave but it was not successful. Enclave resident who had lands inside their host territory were treated as foreigner's land and it restricted them to cultivate those land. Even the enclave residents were not allowed to go to the markets for selling their crops. It severely impacted upon their economic life on one hand and everyday life on the other.

The sufferings of these residents started as soon as the enclave resident realised that their everyday movement outside of their place leads to the cross-territorial movement. Further deprivation started with the introduction of visa in 1952 because this incident caused an urgent need of a passport and visas to travel to the host territory (Whyte 2002). As the markets, towns, all were located outside the enclave [inside the lands of host country] the enclave resident are highly dependant on their host countries economy. This dependency on the host country and lack of accession to it make the situation adverse. They even could not make their passport because of the

absence of offices for such purpose. Such circumstances made them landlocked in their own land.

However, with the emergence of Bangladesh as a new state against East Pakistan, the antagonistic attitudes was reduced between the two states but by the time the states have already forgotten to consider enclave resident. Besides, the enclave population is so small and their lands are so small that it did not raise any interest among the state elites to think about the enclave resident. Both states have forgotten these residents who gradually became stateless and were living with a non-citizenship status.

### **3.2.2 Quotidian Life & Everyday Micro-Politics:**

Enclave residents are mostly agriculturist resident. They produce crops and sell it at the market inside the host state. There is no market inside the enclave because of the foreigner status of the enclave. Long years ago, few markets existed inside the large enclaves, but gradually it withered away because of the foreign status of the enclaves (Schendel 2002). Jones (2010) mentioned that Bangladesh did not want to settle markets inside Indian enclaves because of lawlessness condition. Consequently, the enclave resident had no choice instead of being dependant on the surrounding state. But their dependency on the host state brought several problems into their life. The surrounding host resident sensed the rightlessness nature of the enclave resident. The surrounding host resident started to benefit themselves from the enclave dweller's ambiguous citizenship. They often harassed the enclave resident. Ratan Barman, an enclave dweller from Nolgram Bangladeshi enclave shared his experience of such harassment.

*“It was difficult to go to the surrounding market. Indians often did not allow us to go to the market. They used to fix the amount of*

*produces for us to sell in their market. We could not sell more than their fixed amount. Even, they sometimes snatched our crops, and often asked bribes for using the host country's market.”*

(Male, 60 years, Sitalkuchi, Primary Survey, September 2018)

Ratan' experience reveals the micro-politics between enclave dwellers and host residents. With the abandonment by the parent state, the enclave dweller becomes dependant on their surrounding state, but their huge dependency often created troubles for them. As the enclaves were un-administrated; there was no one to voice for the enclave resident. The enclave residents did not have legal protection, as a result they also could not protest against it. This shows how local politics has worked in the enclaves. So, the multiple struggles in everyday life are produced by local politics.

On the other hand, due to abandonment by states there was several problems in quotidian life. As both states abandoned them no one has had any concern ever for them. One can say that the enclaves remained out of any developmental work after partition. The enclave's roads are too narrow to use even a lightweight vehicle. The enclaves were not electrified. The whole enclave used to be wrapped with darkness at the day's end. *Kerosine* lamps were the only method to hide the darkness. But not all resident could afford it. The resident who cannot even afford a *Kerosene* lamp tried to finish their daily work before the dark. There are no health centres for the enclave resident. Most of the time they got rejected by the workers of the health centres from surrounding health centres because of their ambiguous citizenship.

There is no school inside those small plots of land so; the enclave residents did not have an education. However, they manage it in two ways. It is either to send them in the school of the surrounding area or establish school inside an enclave. Both techniques were applied; while the first one is a kind of tactic. And the second one is

the willingness of the resident to educate their children. The enclaves, where a large group of resident resided, established schools inside the enclave; for instance enclave dwellers of Bangladesh enclave Karala, established a school to educate their children. This obviously could not assure jobs but at least they could help in getting a basic education.

The enclave residents are economically very poor resident. Their identity as a foreigner increased several complexities in their daily life. Here it needs to be mentioned that the economy of the surrounding state was not a good one also. It is a rural economy outside the enclave too. But what distinguishes is that the host resident could avail the benefits of an ordinary citizen's life while the enclave resident could not. This made the enclave resident poorer than anyone else. They did not have ration card cards or any identity that could assure their identity as a Bangladeshi citizen or an Indian citizen. Due to this factor, they could not avail rations from PDS shops of the host state.<sup>9</sup> It increased the difficulties in their lives. They have to buy those subsidised products such as rice, *kerosene*, etc at an exorbitant rate from the host resident.

The physical geography of the enclave further complicated this process. For example, the resident of Pashchim Bakhairchora Bangladesh enclave suffered the most for the integration of geographical location and politics. Pashchim Bakhairchora's land was not suitable for agriculture. It often flooded during monsoon. The tribal *Oraon* people who settled here during the 1980s had suffered extremely. They could not cultivate the land and grow crops. Due to ambiguous citizenship, they could not avail rations

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<sup>9</sup> PDS or Public Distribution System is a food security system, established by Government of India in 1944 to distribute food grains and other essential items such as kerosene, soap, cooking oil, sugar etc to the poor citizens of India at a subsidised rate.

from the surrounding state. Besides, being too poor they could not buy food produces at a higher rate. As a result, they have to depend on petty things for living such as yam, ferns, jute leaves, etc. They have to depend on their surrounding area for the job.

The enclaves which had a riverside location were dependant on other than agricultural activity. The presence of the river causes river bank erosion and due to this, many enclave residents lost their lands. In the Batrigach enclave, many enclave dwellers lost their lands and chose to out-migrate for jobs. Migration became a common phenomenon for enclave dwellers who could not solely depend on agriculture. Migration not only opened an opportunity for a living but it caused another problem for the migrants. Residents from Indian enclaves used to migrate to the urban destination such as Dhaka, and in India, there are several destinations for Bangladeshi enclave dweller such as Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Kochi, etc.

Every time the enclave resident out-migrated from the enclaves, it brought additional problems in their life. The enclave residents are often asked to reveal their identity in their destination place. If they had revealed their identity as an enclave resident, it is not usually believed at first. This type of peculiar territory can exist in the world it was unbelievable for many people. Second, if they are asked to show their identity cards they could not produce. As a result, they were thought of as illegal migrants and sentenced into jail. Enclave resident's outmigration is full of such narratives which show how national politics and lack of citizenship rights caused dangers in their life. The following is an example of that.

*“Once, one of my relatives went to Delhi for work. When he was coming back he was caught up by the police. As he had no Voter ID or ration cards to show, he was suspected as an illegal infiltrator*



*from Bangladesh. He was taken to Notkabari and punished. He was sentenced to jail. His son was kept in one cell and he was on the other. [Kom asubidha tahole!] Such big trouble. After three months of punishment in jails, he came back home by crossing Bangladesh [border] through Changrabandha. Just think, such a nuisance!”*

(Female, 60 years, Karala, Primary Survey, January 2018)

The above example shows how state agents impose problems in enclave life. On one hand, the host country punishes resident for not being the citizen of their country. On the other home country could not save their own resident. Home country neither could give them citizenship rights nor could save them from such a situation. Their basic needs pushed them to move out of their enclaves but when it is executed they became trapped under the duality of state territories.

The life of enclave resident whose dwellings are located very close to the international boundary was dependant on the mercy of the host country's Border Guards. The enclave resident needs to take permission from the border guards for any ceremonial function. If there is any festival or ceremonies to be performed, the enclave resident had to give an account of their economic transaction. Not only on the ceremonial function, but they also had to show details of their every purchase to the border guards. The border guards wanted clarification of their purchases during the ceremonial occasion. If they fail, it is treated as suspected. At that time enclave resident become helpless and they have to give bribe such as chickens, eggs to the border guards in order to be saved from any legal harassment. It clearly shows the home country's abandonment and host country intrusion in the matter of enclave resident's everyday life. While the home country was unable to administer them, host countries agents interfere with the enclave's affair.

### 3.2.3 Life in Dangerous Zone:

Violence was to be a part of the day in the enclave life. Stories of violence across enclave and host territories are widely shared during the fieldwork. Due to the lack of state machinery, there was no law to regulate violence inside enclaves. This resulted in an increase in violence and crimes in the enclaves. Jones (2010) mentioned that various insurgent groups such as Kamtapur Liberation Organisation and Sanwar groups took the advantages of enclave's lawlessness and they establish training camps inside Dohola Khagrabari and Basunianpara enclaves. Political leaders from the surrounding host countries have been killed in the enclaves due to intermediate issues between the enclave and Host resident. It seems that enclave residents are violent and criminals. But their violent activity was the result of their extreme sufferings, deprivation, powerlessness and unequal status as compared with the host resident. There were several cases of dacoit inside the enclaves. The enclaves residents are already in an economically poor condition. Incidents of loot and dacoit in the absence of law made them economically vulnerable. The following narrative of Amina Bibi confirms the dangerous situation in the enclaves-

*"We had a great fear of dacoit in the enclave. I have experienced it 3 times in my life-two before my marriage, and one after my marriage. They used to loot everything from the house, even including the utensils. We used to hide us under the beds. It was such extreme fear."*

(Female, 90 years, Nolgram, Primary Survey, August 2018)

Amina's experience reveals violent and lawlessness condition of enclaves. The dacoits used to threaten the enclave resident. They used to loot their crops, valuable ornament, utensils, cattle, etc. Sometimes, they were looted by the neighbours of their

host state but they could not protest it. Such incidents made enclave resident economically vulnerable.

Because of the lawlessness condition, the enclaves became a safe hideout for the criminals. Criminals, after committing crimes used to hide into the enclave to be saved from the police. The criminals knew that the host state's police cannot enter into the enclave as this will cause an interference with the sovereignty of another state. The criminals not only entered into the enclave, gradually they made it a place of smuggling. In this context, Anju Orao, a teenage tribal girl from Pashchim Bakhairchora enclave shared me her experience –

*“I was a child then. I have seen smugglers to keep smuggled items such as Ganja, bicycles etc near our place. I often become surprised to see the huge numbers of cycles near our home. Even, I had a wish if I could steal one of them but I was never allowed by my parents. I always thought that if they can use our place, why can't I do anything.”*

(Female, 16 years, Dinhata, Primary Survey, January 2018)

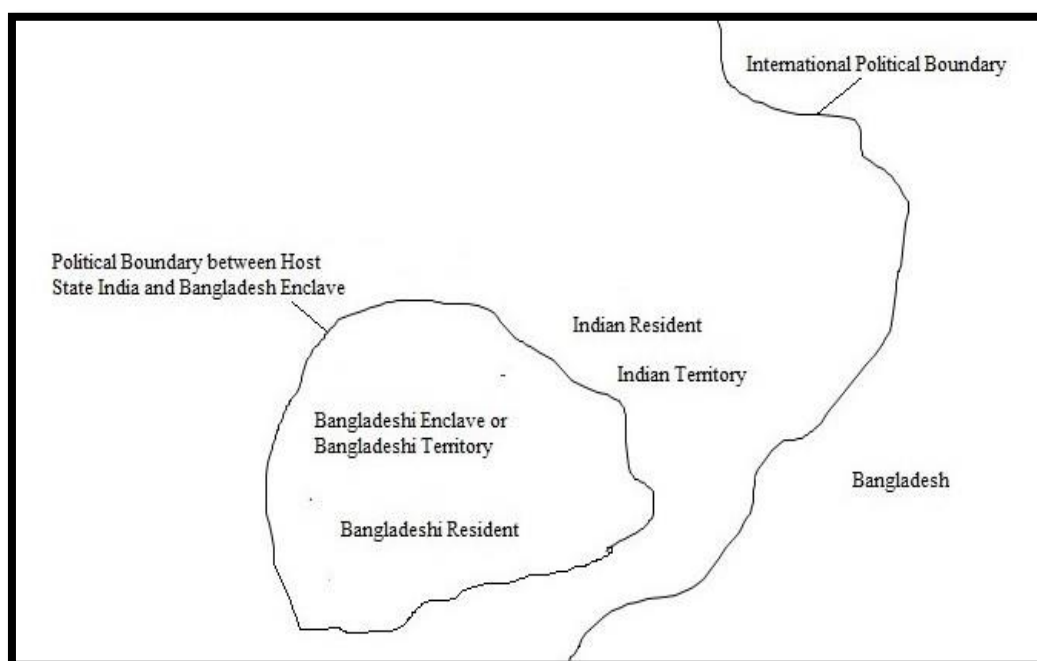
As the story narrates, smugglers used this opportunity of the enclave and kept all the smuggled products inside an enclave. The story also reflects that enclave residents could not protest against these smuggling inside the enclave. The smugglers often used enclave resident's home but enclave residents could not oppose to it. However, it brought them other difficulties in their lives because the increasing smuggling activity in the border enclaves leads to the interference of the border guards which again imposed another challenge for them. The border guards entered into the enclave illegally and search the enclave houses sometimes without their consent. This way the host state tried to impose power on these residents.

### 3.3 Negotiating Borders and Everyday Borderisation:

#### 3.3.1 Mobile Bodies and Mobile Borders:

The enclaves itself are a small piece of land and hence small territories. However, if there is any territory, there must be borders or boundaries to delineate its own space from the outsider's space. In this regard, in the enclaves the boundary that differentiates the enclave's territory and the surrounding area or the host country's territory is another political border. For example, in Coochbihar borderland, the line between the outer limit of Bangladesh enclave's land and the host state's land is a different political boundary. Here, it works as a zone of separation between the two political identities –Bangladeshi people and Indian people.

**Diagram 3.1 Diagrammatic Representation Enclave-Host state Boundary**



In the enclaves the boundary between enclave's land and host countries land is very significant. It is because if any people have migrated or moved permanently from the surrounding area to the enclave, they become an enclave dweller and lost his/her

citizenship or degraded from an ordinary citizen of the surrounding State. For instance, the Indian residents who have bought land inside any Bangladesh enclave because of its cheaper price or due to communal violence and have permanently moved had lost their Indian citizenship. As a result, they are devoted to marginalised life. On the other side, if any Bangladeshi enclave resident could buy some land just outside the enclave border, his/ her everyday life would have become easy (see section 3.4).

Besides all the permanent mobility from enclave to mainland or mainland to enclave, temporary movements are also significant. The enclaves are very small, and because of their small size, most of enclave did not get any facility for daily practices. The enclave residents are mostly dependent on the host countries economy, and infrastructure in their daily life. Every time they move outside of their enclave it would lead to a cross-border movement. Whenever they went to the host land for daily activities, they became foreigner on the host land. For instance, whenever a Bangladeshi enclave dweller crossed the enclave border and go for shopping in the Indian side, they became a foreigner in India in the sense of crossing the international border. This temporary movement often comes with legal troubles to the enclave people. If enclave residents are found suspicious at the host land, and they fail to convince, it leads to persecution. It shows that bordering is not only spatially diffused and differentiated but also inscribed upon and carried in the bodies of those who move among us (Sendhardt 2013). Hence it can be said that territorial border crossing is a common experience for enclave dweller. For the enclave dwellers, borders do not present merely on the border area, rather everywhere in societies (Passi & Prakkola 2008).

### **3.3.2 Role of International Border in Everyday Life:**

International border played a prominent role in the lives of enclave dweller. The dwellings which are located very close to the border was affected the most by the international border. The creation of fence created another complication in everyday life in the enclaves. The enclave residents who were living close to the boundary line they could go to their parent country by crossing the boundary. They could go to the markets for daily or weekly shopping, or selling produces and also could maintain a connection with their own state. But it became restricted as soon as India started fencing along the India-Bangladesh border.

With the creation of the fence, their movement on the opposite side becomes restricted and they become fully dependant on the host country. It not only restricted mobility in everyday life, it further complicated the kinship ties. The enclave resident lost contact with their kin people who are living inside their parent state. The enclave residents need to go to their home state for land registration issues. Land registration process also becomes complicated due to the strict border control. As a result, many enclave people formed a local council inside enclave to solve land issues. For instance, people of Karala enclave have established a local council to regulate their land-related issues. The strict border control, patrolling along the border and finally, creation of fence posed multiple problems for them.

### **3.3.3 Border in the Mind:**

Religion-based partition in 1947 not only divided India-and Pakistan's territory. It divided the people also. In 1949 when Coochbihar joined India, the enclaves became modern international enclaves. When both states realised that their opponent's land is

inside their country they started to play the territorial game. Both states started trying to defeat each other in international politics and wanted to show their power through enclaves. Gradually it is infiltrated from the national level to the local level. The Pakistani and Indian villagers started realising that everyone inside their country does not belong to their own state; rather some belong to their enemy country. On the other hand, when enclave residents have found complexities in everyday life they also gradually explored that they are different from their neighbours. They recognized that they are living on their ancestral land but unfortunately their country falls on another side. In this way, the binary of 'us' and 'other' have been constructed between the enclave and their surrounding resident.

The local politics has a very important role to stimulate this 'us' and 'other' binary'. As soon as Pakistani people realised that there is Indian land inside Pakistan and Indian residents are living there, they started to evict them. This process continued even after 1971 and enclave residents were threatened many times to leave their lands. A similar situation happened inside the Bangladeshi enclaves in India. In this context, a former Bangladeshi enclave dweller of Purba Bakhalirchora enclave shared me that Indian mainland residents used to say "*let's throw out the Bangladeshi ghosts [Bangladeshi Bhoot Bhagao]*" (Fieldnote, November 2018).

Apart from this, religion has also played an important role to create a division between enclave dwellers. Schendel (2002) mentioned that a unique identity was developed in India and Pakistan after 1947 based on transterritoriality. "Both states saw themselves as being in charge of the populations living in their own territory, but also of a category of people living in the territory of the other state. These two groups can be described as citizens and proxy citizens" (ibid, p.127). Indians are the citizen of India and Pakistanis are the citizens of Pakistan but due to their transterritoriality

Hindus in Pakistan were proxy citizens of India and Muslims in India were the proxy citizens of Pakistan. Such category of proxy citizenship had a profound impact on enclave dwellers. For instance, in Indian enclave Muslims were the proxy citizens of Pakistan [later Bangladesh] therefore get a special behaviour from the citizens of Pakistan/Bangladesh and in Pakistani/Bangladeshi enclave Hindu's were the proxy citizens, thus got benefits from their Indian host state (ibid). In case, if there is any communal riot, this had resulted in violence on Hindus in Indian enclaves and Muslims in Pakistani/Bangladeshi enclave. In this context, Kalachan Miya shared a story-

*“I was a child when I came to this enclave. My mother took me here in her lap during the 1950's riot<sup>10</sup>. Since then, I am living in the enclave. There were around 150 Muslim families used to live here. But now, less than 10 families live here. It was difficult to live in the enclave for the Muslims enclave dweller. They [Hindu] took our pets, crops etc from our house. They used to quarrel with us. They made it very difficult for us to live here.”*

(Male, 80 years, Maddhya Bakhairchora, Primary Survey, January 2018)

Kalachan's story reflects the religious vulnerability in the enclaves. The enclave where he lives once was inhabited by Muslim. All the three Bakhairchora enclaves [Purba, Pashchim and Maddhya] were inhabited by Muslims but due to the religious difference, they left their native place. This religious otherness has created a psychological border in the minds of the enclave dwellers. However, this psychic border was not only limited in the minds but has also led the enclave dwellers to cross the geographical border. Hindu oppression forced the Muslim enclave dwellers to

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<sup>10</sup> 1950 riots refer to the riot between the Bengali Hindu and Bengali Muslims which took place in East Bengal and East Pakistan.



escape from Bangladeshi enclave; and similarly, many Hindu and tribal people were evicted by Bangladeshis from Indian enclaves and get sheltered in India (Kaur 2002).

In this way, national politics was gradually absorbed with the local. The bitterness of the relationship between India and East Pakistan made the enclave-host countries relationship very bitter. As India and Pakistan considered themselves enemies of each other, the host people also started considered enclave as an enemy. This way territorial and border disputes created the seed of mental borders among enclave and host country's people. Paasi's (2013) argument fits here that borders can be effectively used to produce and reproduce the limits of an imagined community of "us" and "them," friends and enemies.

During the 1950s, the commencement of border was infiltrated in the ordinary people in the above manner. Later, when East Pakistan is removed from Asian history, the border became less valuable as a political border, but it has strengthened its position as a symbolic border. After 1971, as the bilateral relationship is improved between India and Bangladesh, it brought much stability in daily life for the enclave people. But at that time period, a division had been already constructed between the enclave and host people. The abandonment by states, helplessness, and exclusion in everyday life had made the enclave people to realise that they are enclave resident or '*chiter lok*' and they are dissimilar to the host people.

The later generation of enclave dwellers even are not aware of all these histories and geographies of their place, but what they knew is that they are '*chiter lok*'. The people I met during ethnographic work in the Bangladeshi enclaves, very few people of them knew the reasons behind their condition. But they knew that they are enclave residents or *chiter lok*. For them, they were never been Bangladeshi citizen, but enclave people.

The identity that dominated among the enclave dweller was only enclave identity. As Luhmann (1991, cited in Sendhardt 2013) states that difference is constitutive of identity, and identity emerges only as a product of differentiation so, it can be said that the differences and exclusion in everyday living are constitutive of enclave identity.

For them, enclave is a space where people did not get any help and support from *Sarkar* or Government [state]. They know, enclave life is a discriminated life and full of hurdles. This shared experience of exclusion, statelessness and marginalisation made them realise about their distinctive enclave identity. Paasi and Prakkola (2008) aptly stated that it is important to look at mundane everyday practices in order to understand how the reproduction of national identities occurs and how feelings of belonging are created and performed—i.e. how a national ‘we’ is created. Enclave resident’s everyday life shows the way the ‘enclave’ or ‘chit’ identity is built by them. It reflects that boundaries are mediums and instruments of construction of meaning and identities (Paasi 1998).

Similar to the enclave residents, for the host residents too, Bangladeshi enclave residents were not Bangladeshi, rather they are enclave resident. They viewed enclave as a non-state space, where people lives a lawless, helpless and discriminated life. For them the enclave residents are those who are by fate does not deserve a good life. They considered enclave people as those who have no value for any state. In the perception of the host people, enclave dwellers are the most powerless and marginalised people. During the fieldwork, an enclave dweller described that enclave dwellers are “*Joghonno lok*” or heinous people to the host people.

Momina, a Bangladeshi enclave dweller narrates-

*“Indian People used to say -enclave life is not a life! They used to taunt us and said- Enclave people, you have nothing; Nobody cares for you. Sometimes they make fun of us-Hey don’t you dare to do much, remember you are an enclave dweller, I will kill you.”*

(Female, 50 years, Kismat Batrigach, Primary Survey, January 2018)

Host people's perceptions about enclave dweller have sharpened the border between the enclave and host people in their minds. Gradually the border became stronger in the minds of enclave-host people. This imaginary border had been constructed in mundane activities of everyday life. In fact, unlike the territorial border, it was produced randomly at any time. This is constructed when an enclave people confront a host resident during very ordinary activities, such as walking on the host land, participating in socio-cultural activities, doing agricultural works in the field, shopping in host country’s market etc. This imaginary border has transformed the enclave host relation into a very bitter relation. This bitter relationship is reproduced further by the abusive comments of the host people in daily life. Fulmoni, a Bangladeshi enclave dweller has explained this-

*“When we went to the market on the Indian side they taunt us. They used dirty language. Indian women used indecent languages if we come across them during our activities. They said- ‘Enclave will never be exchanged, you will always be an enclave dweller. If it ever happened, we will take out our clothes, <sup>11</sup>[Chit konodino India hobar noy, jodi hoy tobe amra kapor tule nachbo]. We will dance naked in front of you. And they laughed at us.”*

(Female, 30 years, Primary Survey, January 2018)

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<sup>11</sup> Taking off cloth is not a feminine thing and nudity in public is an unimaginable thing for a woman. By stating that speech, the Indian host country’s women meant that enclave exchange is an unimaginable and impossible matter. This type of comments was also used to insult enclave’s women which created a psychological border between the enclave and host people.

The above statements showed the negative facet of enclave and host country relationship. It shows how an enclave dweller is perceived by the host people. After 1949, the enclave people were denied from every basic facility because of their stateless condition. When enclave people realised that enclave exchange could bring normalcy in life, they started doing protest and movements for several years for enclave exchange. They protested against their states with an aim to lead a normal life like their neighbours of their host country. But it was not fruitful [until 2015] and when host people realised that their fervent cry does not reach to the deaf ears of the state elites, they started taunting the enclave residents. Host people utilised every opportunity to emotionally abuse them. Their everyday political struggle was nothing less than a funny action for the most people.

So, borders pits one communities against each other. It clearly showed the power relation of enclave host people where-- host people could show their power over enclave residents over comments by insulting enclave resident. The contrasting power relation of powerlessness and powerfulness among enclave and host residents had sharpened the psychological border between enclave host people. So, in this context, borders are both symbols and institutions that are mobilized ideologically to produce inclusion and exclusion and the imagined “purification” of space (Sibley 1995, cited in Paasi 2013). The imaginative border in the mind affected the ethical life too. The following story is narrated by a Chaitanya, of Bangladeshi enclave Kistamt Batrigach.

*“We could not protest against any mischief against our Indian neighbour. Although they were guilty, we had to keep our mouth shut .They could have hundreds of guilt, but we could not protested against them. Do you know why? Because we are enclave dweller and they are Indian. I never had the guts to raise my voice against them.”* (Male, 50 years, Dinjata, Primary Survey, January, 2018)

The above narrative shows the construction of an ethical border between the enclave and host people. Agnew's (2008) statement fits here, -borders matter because they have real effects and they trap thinking about and acting in the world in territorial terms. "They not only *limit* movements of things, money, and people, but they also *limit* the exercise of intellect, imagination, and political will" (ibid p. 176).

The enclave residents could not raise their voice against any misconduct by the host people. They had the fear that if they raise their voice against them, it could hamper their relation. Their bitter relation can hamper further enclave dweller's everyday life because the enclave dweller was fully dependant on host people. It was the mercy of the host people that the enclave dweller can try for ordinary living. In this regard, any protest against host people's activity could hamper enclave's everyday practices. The above example portrays that a border was constructed in the mind, which restricted enclave resident's each and every activity against their host people. This way that psychic border is reproduced in everyday activity and restricted the flow of a decent living. This also indicates that enclave and host countries territorial border can be crossed by enclave resident, but the psychic border cannot be subverted in everyday activities. The political border is permeable, but the border in the mind is impermeable. This indicates that the bordering process is made through practices whether to maintain it, strengthen it or subvert it (Reid et al 2013, cited in Cassidy et al 2017).

### **3.4 Survival Tactics:**

The enclave residents realised that they are living inside an enclave and being an enclave dweller they can not seek help from any state. They understood the fact that they are living inside India and Bangladesh but their status is different from others. As

a result to save themselves from various mischief they applied their own tactic. As Certeau (1984, cited in Yilmaz 2013) argues tactic depends on reasonable utilisation of time and these are the practises which come together and disrupt rapidly, so enclave dwellers practise can be referred to as tactic.

As mentioned earlier, that no schools were established inside the enclave by both the states, the enclave resident tactically found a solution to educate their children. In India to get an admission in a school identity proof is required. The Bangladeshi enclave resident of India did not have any Identity proof that could justify their citizenship as Indians. As a result, they used to make false parents from India. This type of tactic was depended on circumstances, which develops as a crucial practise that interferences to strategies or power mechanism (Kentel 2011, cited in Yilmaz 2013). During admission of their children into school, enclave resident used the names of their Indian neighbours and their address as of their parents. The searching for false parents started a few days earlier of the admission. To convince Indian resident for their favour sometimes they bribe them and sometimes it was fully dependant on kinship or mercy. If Bangladeshi enclave resident has relatives on the Indian side the procedure would become easy. That's why enclave residents always tried to build a marital relationship with their surrounding host residents so that they can cope with the enclave specific deprivation. However, when the enclave resident found someone convinced, the procedure began. In this way, the children could get an education but the only loss they have had was that they got new parents.

The other tactic to cope enclave specific vulnerability was to engage in violent activities. As already discussed that no states tried to regulate violence or crimes in the enclaves consequently enclave dwellers found a tactical solution to this. In case,

they found any criminal has entered inside an enclave they kill the criminals. They knew that any killing inside an enclave would not bring them any legal difficulties. They realised that an officer from their parent territory would not come here by crossing the boundary to investigate it. On the other side host country's police would not enter into enclave because of the sovereignty issue. This type of survival issue has worked there. Although not in a great extent it reduced criminal activities inside the enclave.

Apart from the above-said tactic, the other effective tactic of the enclave dwellers was to buy property in the surrounding state (see fig.3.1). Buying a property in the host state could able them to get citizenship rights in the host country. However, everyone was not able to follow such a tactic. The enclave dwellers whose financial condition was better they could practice such tactic. This could able the enclave residents to make identity cards such as voter ID, AADHAR cards etc by which they could admit their children in schools, getting rations from PDS shop, voting rights etc.

**Fig 3.1: Lands on both side of the enclave-host country boundary owned by a single Bangladeshi enclave dweller who was born in the enclave and bought adjacent Indian lands in order to get help from the host state**



(Source: Primary Survey)

### **3.5 Enclave exchange and Quotidian life:**

#### **3.5.1 De-bordering and Daily Life:**

In Enclaves, the everyday life got distorted again and again with the territorial dynamics and bordering, de-bordering of the space. Here, territorial dynamics means the changing role of the state territory and debordering means the removal of the political border between enclave and host state. As seen in the above discussion that enclaves have undergone multiple territorial changes. During the British period, when these South Asian states have not formed, the enclaves were not very dynamic in nature. As soon as Coochbihar joined India, Coochbihar's territory falls in India, it brought into a modern territorial dynamism. The enclaves at first appeared as fragments of land under local king's domain, later it appeared as East Pakistan's and India's territory, then again it has become India and Bangladesh's territory. With such territorial changes, the enclave dweller got multiple tags of their state. For instance, a Bangladeshi enclave dweller after 1949 became East Pakistani citizen, after 1971 he/she became Bangladeshi citizen, and later in 2015, he/she becomes an Indian citizen. With such changes enclave residents' life have experienced construction and de-construction of multiple barriers and hurdles in their life. Those aspects of enclave life have been already discussed in the earlier section of this chapter.

Here the extreme changes in the enclaves and enclave life has been discussed. With the exchange of India-Bangladesh enclaves, Indian enclaves in Bangladesh is merged with Bangladesh and Bangladeshi enclave land is merged with India. With such changes, the 162 enclaves are now disappeared from the India-Bangladesh's border maps; it also disappeared from the India and Bangladesh borderland. With such changes, enclave resident's identity has been changed. They have chosen their



identity on their own terms and condition. All the Bangladeshi enclave dwellers have chosen Indian citizenship and hence got Indian identity. Indian enclave dwellers have chosen Bangladeshi and Indian Citizenship. Those have chosen Indian citizenship, have come to India. Those who have chosen Indian citizenship, their life have again undergone changes. They have started a new life as an Indian Citizen.

On the other hand, the Bangladeshi citizens who have become Indian, their lives are again modified. Now they have Indian citizenship, and the harshness of everyday life has reduced. Now, they can avail all the basic facilities they seek. With the changes in territories, they are now able to lead a decent life. Now the enclave dwellers can get rations from PDS shop which has reduced their economic deprivation to some extent. Unavailability of ration from PDS shop was a very big economic problem of the enclave dwellers. As already discussed that due to lack of citizenship rights their poverty was increased to a great extent but now their poverty has decreased to some extent. The following conversation with a former enclave dweller reveals the fact.

*Q: So, which one is better, before the exchange or after the exchange?*

*A: After the exchange.*

*Q: Why?*

*A: Now, by God's grace, the problem of insufficiency/scarcity (food or money) has been reduced in my family.*

*Q: How your problem is reduced?*

*A: Now if we want to go outside for work, we can go. But before, when we went to Delhi we had to keep Voter Ids with us. If we could not show, we are sentenced into jails. This problem is solved now. Besides we get rations from PDS shop.*

(Female, 50 years, Primary Survey, January 2018)

Her response reveals two major changes in the everyday lives of the enclave dwellers. First one, it revealed that the scarcity of food is reduced. And second, as they have identity cards [Voter ID, AADHAR] they are not suspected as illegal Bangladeshi

people and are relieved from punishment. Apart from such changes the conditions of the roads in some enclaves are improved. The former Bangladeshi enclaves which are mostly bigger in size have got improved road connection for example Poaturkuthi, Karala etc (see fig 3.2). But the enclaves which are small in size and located in a remote location are still devoid of proper roads, for instance Pashchim Bakhairchora enclave. Besides, the enclave dwellers are provided with Solar panel for irrigating their agricultural lands (see fig 3.3). Electricity is provided to the enclave's residence, schools are built inside enclave which has helped the enclave dwellers to live an ordinary citizen's life.

Enclave exchange not only helped enclave dwellers economically, but it has also strengthened them. Earlier, enclave resident could not protest against any mischief against the host residents which excluded them even from leading an ethical life. With the exchange of territories, this obstacle is reduced. Babul, a former Bangladeshi enclave dweller has explained his pain which has been raised from the absence of citizenship rights-

*"Earlier, we always have the fear that if we raise our voice against our Indian neighbours they could harm us. We did not have the guts to speak against them. Although they were guilty we never spoke against them.*

*But Now! Where you will escape now! [expressing his anger in a loud voice]. Now we will not leave anyone. If anyone does any mischief we will protest, we will not leave anyone. We were humiliated by them. Do you know how much we suffered! [became emotional] We always felt inferior to the Indian people. You are laughing!<sup>12</sup> Can you feel our sufferings; our pain [emotionally]?"*  
(Male, 60 years, Primary Survey, January, 2018)

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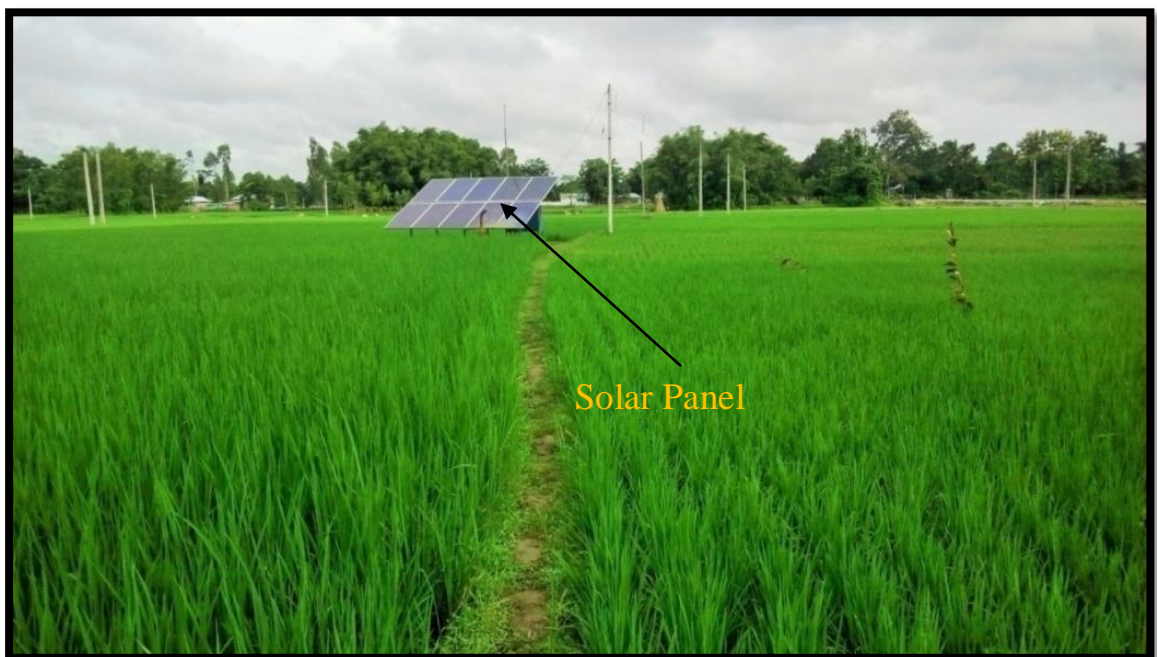
<sup>12</sup> He pointed towards us as I was laughing at his comment. It may seem that I was insensitive and unsympathetic during the interview as I laughed while the participant was expressing his feeling of grief and powerlessness to be an enclave dweller. However, as a researcher I am sympathetic to the feelings of the residents but once I laughed loudly at him to see him repeatedly using Bengali slangs to express his feelings.

The fig 3.2 Newly constructed road inside Karala enclave after the exchange of enclaves



(Source: Primary Survey)

Fig 3.3 Solar panel is provided for agricultural purpose after the exchange of enclaves



(Source : Primary Survey)

This indicates that enclave dwellers were not only kept away from basic facilities, their everyday emotions, and ethics got hurt by their non-citizen status. Enclave exchange brought relief from their everyday emotional sufferings.

The above discussion indicates that enclave exchange has brought positive changes in their everyday life. Although it brought positive changes but it has some negative consequences too. For instance, the kinship relationship between the enclave dwellers has become bitter. Before the exchange, the enclave dwellers did not have any rights to participate in the political activities or elections of the host country. But after the exchange the enclave dwellers got citizenship, consequently, they got the right to participate in the political activities which have resulted in political fights between the enclave dweller. Consequently, the cordial relationship between them has turned into a bitter relationship. The following conversation reveals the fact-

*Q: Do you feel any changes in your life after the exchange of the enclaves?*

*A: "Now, political fights have been started between the enclave dwellers. But, earlier we did not face such a problem. Now the unity of the enclave dwellers is reduced. All the enclave dwellers are divided into various political parties. Earlier, if we had any problem, everyone used to come forward to help us. But now if people could sense that we support a different political party, they do not come forward to help us. During the time of the election, the situation becomes worse. There is fighting, chaos. I don't like it. Sometimes I feel it was better to be an enclave dweller rather than being a citizen of a country. We could not vote earlier but at least we had a mental comfort. But now, we can feel that a social separation has been created." (Female, 32 years, Sitalkuchi, Primary Survey, December 2018)*

The above narrative reflects the role of electoral politics inside the enclave. Though enclave exchange has gifted them the right to decent living it has created a new border in the minds of the people. The enclave residents whose common experience grouped

them a community, but due to a political collision this community perception is damaged. Enclave exchange and its territorial dynamics had lead to the debordering of the enclaves but a psychological border has emerged.

Although de-bordering has caused the enclave-host territorial boundary insignificant in daily life in enclaves, the mental border is still operating at their social life. With the exchange of territories, the political border between host and enclave people has been removed. The enclave host border has become more permeable now. Now daily movement would not cause cross border movement because of the dismissal of the enclave host territorial border. But the border in the minds of both the people has not removed yet. Ramesh, a former Bangladeshi enclave dweller explained-

*“After the exchange, they[Indian host residents] feel themselves no less than a superhuman. They now do not want to give importance to us. Human beings are the most dishonest creature in the world [using a bad language]. You know this is because we are illiterate people. They say like – who the hell they are, they are illiterate enclave people.”*

(Male, 60 years, Primary Survey, January 2018)

It shows that the bitterness of the relationship between enclave host people has not escaped yet. The political border has vanished from the ground but there is no positive change in the neighbourhood relationship. Another example is provided in this context. Fulmoni’s narrative which described that host countries woman has taunted enclave women because of their marginalised status, she shared me that after the exchange of enclaves those women have reduced socialisation with the enclave’s women. Many host countries women have stopped to enter into these former enclaves. Even, during a participation in the *kirtan* in the former Pashchim Bakhairchora enclave, Indian women are observed to avoid enclave’s women and the enclave’s

women are observed to avoid their host neighbours. They still identified their neighbours as Indian and themselves as *Chiter lok* which indicates that the mental border has not fully removed. It clearly portrays that where the border is no longer an obstacle to movement and communication, there may still be social and cultural barriers and mental borders (Paasi & Prakkola 2008).

### **3.6 Conclusion:**

The above discussion reveals a vivid picture of the enclave. It shows the various difficulties in the everyday life of the enclave dwellers. The chapter reveals the micro-politics in the enclave by which enclave dweller's life was hampered severely. It made enclave resident's life full of extreme suffering. The sufferings were sometimes escapable by some tactics and sometimes were impossible to overcome. The chapter also reveals that every aspect of living was shaped by borders and territorial dynamism. It was not the physical border, but the micro politic of differentiation has led to an emergence of the psychological border which operated in ordinary enclave dwellers lives. Their life reflects numerous border encounters and the border they experience is not limited within the border zones, it can be developed any time. So it can be said that bordering practices in the day to day life produce exclusion and differential inclusion into multi-layered political boundaries (Cassidy et al 2017). It can be said that with the enclave exchange, exclusion from basic facilities is reduced but their life is going through a new phase of border making.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Everyday and the Grand: Capturing Contours of Women's Life in the Enclaves**

#### **4.1 Introduction:**

Here, an attempt is made to capture the everyday life of women and how it is informed by emotion like feelings of constant fear, anxiety in living in the enclaves. The first half of the chapter explores the role of emotion that informs the relationship between everyday life and border. In capturing it, the role of both physical and symbolic violence is highlighted that impinges on the agencies of the women in the enclaves. Here issues of public and private/inside and outside became important as how looking through gender lens this distinction collapses in spaces of domesticity like home and outside it. An effort has been made to understand the categories of spaces that women encounter in carrying out the affairs of daily lives and how they negotiate the hyper-visible spaces like the enclaves. And more importantly how these negotiations acquire a sort of permanency.

Secondly, the question of the intersection of women's body and border are being explored. Here, the study takes a biographical approach in order to capture the episodes/events in their lives. Here, marriage is considered to be an important episode in the life of women. So, it tries to capture how marriage and enclave are intertwined in the lives of women in order to understand as to how the border is reproduced in the lives of these women. This important aspect has been ignored in the research on enclaves which provides an opportunity to portray the various facets of the lives of women. Moreover, intersectionality has been explored enough to examine how different categories of women experience gender discrimination and violence differently.

The chapter talks about women's lives in the enclaves based on two-time periods-one, when the enclaves are not exchanged and second when the enclaves are exchanged. Most of the portion of this chapter focuses on examining the lives of women when enclaves are not exchanged. It does so because it is imperative to sketch how women lived their life when there was an absence of state machinery. It is crucial to understand how enclaves have shaped the lives of women as space was lawless and violent. So the major portion discusses various issues of the lives of women in the context of un-exchanged enclaves. However, an attempt is made to draw the major changes in the lives of women after the exchange of enclaves. The last section of this chapter talks about the everyday lives of women after the merging of enclaves with the surrounding country.

## **4.2 Emotion and Everyday Life of Women:**

### **4.2.1 The Discourse of Emotion and Space:**

The intersection of emotion and space has been explored widely in the emotional geography's research where various forms of human emotions have been considered. In emotional geography's research, the human body and their emotions are given the highest importance. Davidson and Milligan (2004) remarked that our foremost, most immediate and most intimately felt geography is the body. McDowell (1999) argues that the body is the most immediate place, the location or site. It possesses a number of characteristics and the way it is viewed by others depends on space and place (ibid). The body is the site of emotional expression and emotion takes place within and around spatial scales (Davidson and Milligan 2004). Anderson and Smith (2001) argued that feelings and emotions make the world as we know and live it.



The use of various kinds of emotional expression has made geographers to take emotions seriously. A wide range of such scholarship has been enriched by feminist geographers. Pile (2010; p.7) has remarked that "By taking seriously women's experiences of space and place, and treating the personal as political, feminist geographers were alert not only to the emotions and feelings that women experienced in particular places and spaces but also to how emotions framed and circumscribed sexed and gendered experiences of place and spaces". Feminist political geographers also argued to adopt an emotional dimension to understand nationhood and nationality. Dowler (2001; cited in Davidson and Milligan 2004) has urged for taking emotions seriously in understanding national imagination. Koskela (1999) also argued that feelings and emotions contribute to the process of producing space. Emotions such as fear is a widely explored theme in feminist geographic works to connect with a spatial expression of women's emotion.

There are notable works in human geography which shows the relationships of fear, crime with the spatial division of everyday life. Literature pertaining to fear and access to space have revealed that fear is key a constraining factor. However fear does not impact everyone and at an equal extent. Individual's social position controls fear among resident. People who are more disadvantaged socially or economically, they are likely to be affected by fear of crime (Pain 2001). Fear is acute among the communities who feel a sense of powerlessness and lack of social democratic control (Smith 1987). The greater the isolation, the weaker ones' position and consequently greater fear of crime ( Balvig 1990, cited in Koskela 1999). Research shows that fear of violence is acute among women than men and women's less visibility in the public spaces varies because of their fear of violence ( Pain 1991, 1997; Valentine 1989; Paul 2011, Yeoh and Yeow 1997). There are notable works pertaining to women's

fear of violence and spatial accessibility which confirm that that women's mobility and spatial perception is not mediated by their individual choice, rather they are mediated through gendered experience of those places.

Condon et al's (1997) study reveals that women's freedom of movement in public places is reduced by their feeling of the threat of various kinds of violence. Valentine (1989) contends that Women's spatial access is guided by their perception of space. She argues that women's exclusion in public space is the result of the spatial expression of patriarchy. She has shown that women's spatial mobility is influenced by the mental image of spaces about crimes and gendered violence. Koskela's (1999) research has shown that women's perception and their experience of violence changes women's spatial perception and excluded them from public space. She found that women who had experienced violence on public spaces have become more fearful to access public space and such violence has limited their mobility. Fear of men's violence in the public spaces had turned these spaces into a highly masculine field (ibid).

Yeoh and Yeow (1997) shows in their study that extreme violence like rape heavily which impacts on their use of public spaces. She reveals that not only such spatial perception restricts women's activity but their parent's images about various gendered crimes affect to use specific spaces. Girls are taught to fear public spaces by their parents as they perceive that the threat of sexual violence is greater over public spaces and private spaces are considered safer for their daughters (ibid). Mehta and Bondi's (1999) study reveals that men do not feel the fear of sexual violence while the opposite is the case for women because male sexual aggression is mostly directed towards women. It further stated that women have a fearful image in their minds

about violent attacks upon them but they try not to be so influenced by their fears which could restrict their mobility although they are conscious about the spaces where crime can be committed.

All the above studies, however, are particularly from the perspective of social relations based on a particular space, and they could not incorporate the political aspects of fear and its relation with space. There are very limited works which show how such reproduction informs women's access to public and private space (Pain and Smith 2008; Shirlow and Pain 2003). Furthermore, most of the works identify the production of women's fear in the urban context. The lack of engagement of politics with women's fear and the production of space, particularly in the rural context provides an opportunity to engage enclave's spatial features to explore how politically violent spaces and their reproduction creates gender realities of women in enclaves. As the enclaves are located in the borderland area, it gives a chance to analyse the essential links of gender and politics in a rural and transnational context.

#### **4.2.2 Fear, Violence and Bordering of Women's Bodies in Enclave:**

In the former enclaves, all the enclave dwellers were right less and were vulnerable to crimes. However, women in the enclaves were vulnerable from sexual violence and violent attacks-which is scarcely experienced by men. Due to the lesser presence of state machinery, the enclaves had become ungoverned spaces for more than six decades and it created enclaves as a criminal space (see chapter 3). Increased criminal activities created a sense of fear among women's perception that the criminals could take the chance of their lawlessness condition and could sexually abuse them. The insecurity that women faced was mostly of sexual exploitation because of lawlessness

and lack of legal protection from any male violence. Women were afraid of attacks and violence not only from the criminals but also from their neighbouring resident.

During the conversation with the women of the enclaves, they shared their fear of violence when the enclaves are not exchanged. They revealed that the surrounding mainland resident could threaten the enclave residents anytime, by saying that, "*enclave residents cannot do anything even though we kill them*" (Fieldnote, Nolgram enclave, August 2018). Such type of threat accelerated an increased level of fear among women. They had a mental image in their mind about spaces outside of their homes as being unsafe. Their perceptions are established in a temporal context and highly dependent on the prevailing situation. Their everyday life was a negotiated version which was structured by the political activities and the prevailing situation in the enclaves. The bitter relationship between India and Pakistan intensified the hostility between enclave-host resident which further resulted in violent activities which used women's bodies for showing their enmity. Such violent activities raised fear of sexual violence which perpetuated in the mental images of women, consequently they constrained themselves into the bounded space of their home to prevent themselves. The following story of Rokeya bibi highlights it-

*"It was very difficult to live here. There was no law and nothing. Fight. Chaos. Once the whole enclave was burnt down. Oh what an extreme fear! A girl was even abducted. Being afraid, we stopped going outside. We sat like a frog in our room. Whatever the men used to bring from the market we used to cook and managed somehow. We would not even go for farming. It was extreme Fear."* (Female, 60 years, Bangladeshi enclave, Primary Survey, August 2018)

Rokeya's experience illuminates that women's everyday life was hampered by violent activities in the enclaves. Rokeya bibi states that she was afraid of violence on women

and she stopped going outside, even for farming. While the burning of the whole enclave indicates the vulnerability of the enclave residents, the practice of women abduction clearly shows the gendered vulnerability of the women. Women's bodies are produced to show hostility and to validate the territorial claim. Cons (2013) has also shown that women are used as an ensign to epitomizing belonging in the Bangladeshi enclave of Angorpota Dohogram. There was a growing politics by which the local men ascertained control over this enclave.

The enclave's men shared their nationalist feeling with Bangladesh while the Indian host resident had objected to this. In such a situation, territorial belonging heightened and women's body was interpreted as tantamount to support their nationalism and territorial claim. He has shown that if the enclave women were tortured and raped by the surrounding host resident, revenge must be played by the enclave men by torturing the surrounding host women. So rape was a political technique of terror that inflicted physical and psychological trauma upon women (Tyner 2015), which impacted women's life severely. The masculine politics was so active in the enclave and the surrounding places that women were established as a soft terrain where the men could inscribe their belongings and claims. These types of the situation made women vulnerable for exploitation and resulted in a multiplication of fear.

So, it is argued that insecurity grown from the fear of gendered violence among the enclave women is intrinsically tied with the perception of enclaves as a violent space which has a great impact on their everyday life. The relation of male violence and male domination in the enclaves has a profound impact on the enclave women's perception of space and in their choice of free movement within and outside the enclaves. The more hostility between enclave and host resident, the more violence on

women and consequently the more women restrained themselves from moving outside of their home.

#### **4.2.3 Religion, Violence and Everyday life:**

Apart from the hostile relation between enclave-host resident, women's vulnerability and everyday life were also informed by their religious identity. As India and Pakistan had a bitter history of state formation based on religious division, religious factor played an important role in everyday life, particularly in women's life. Both the Hindu and Muslims used the body of the opposite religion's women to show their territorial claim and masculinity. As observed during fieldwork, the Hindu women in Indian enclaves were more vulnerable to violence than a Muslim woman. On the contrary, Muslim women were more vulnerable in Bangladesh enclave than the Hindu women. When Sonamoni Barman, a Hindu Indian enclave dweller came from Bangladesh after enclave exchange and currently living in Mekhliganj settlement camp was asked, if there was any violence on women due to religious identity, she answered that she did not face it but saw one young Hindu woman to experience it. She narrates-

*"I saw, a [Hindu] girl in our enclave was tortured by Muslim Men. The girl was very poor. She even did not have her parents. There was no one to take care of her. However, she got married in the same enclave but was later abandoned by her husband. She also had a child. One day she was abducted by few Muslim [mainland] men. One of those Muslims wanted to marry her. She was taken away near a pond, then her bangles [Sankha] were broken, Vermilion was washed away and she was forced to marry that person.<sup>13</sup> There was no one to voice for her. It was such oppression!"*(Female, 40 years, Mekhliganj settlement camp, Primary Survey, January 2018)

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<sup>13</sup> Shaankha is kind of Bangles made of a conch shell and Vermillion is a red powder. Both of these are used as symbols of the marriage of Hindu Bengali women.

Sonamoni's oral testimony reflects that she got magnified by their religious identity. As the girl was an enclave dweller, she was vulnerable to take any legal action. On the other hand, due to her minority identity, she was subjected to violence. She was forced to change her religious identity and she did not face sexual exploitation but she did face severe emotional torture which completely changed her life and her identity. Her experience is informed by her Hindu identity in an Indian enclave. Being a Hindu and being abandoned by her husband, she is exposed to extreme emotional torture and misfortune. Such an incident not only has rattled these women emotionally for the moment but also has changed their course of life. Such violence due to religious status had an immense impact on their everyday life because their choice of the free movement depended on their religious status. Hindu women's lives were very restricted in Indian enclaves. Lakshmi Roy, a Hindu woman from Haldibari settlement camp shared her experience in this context-

*"We, Hindu had lots of problem in the enclave. Women always felt unsafe in our enclave; because most of the residents inside the enclave or outside the enclave are Muslims. We could not move freely. We get worried when our daughters become young. We always had the fear if any Muslim tortures us or abducts our daughter. As a result, we used to get our girls to marry at a very early age"*

(Female, 40 years, Haldibari Settlement Camp, Primary Survey, January 2018)

Lakshmi's experience in the Indian enclaves clearly illustrates women's vulnerability due to their religious status. The story also reveals that younger women were more vulnerable to exploitation. Sonamoni's story and Lakshmi's own experience, both reveal that the younger women whether they are married or not are more susceptible to violence. Their susceptibility increased with the intersection of religion and age. Similar to the Hindu enclave dwellers tribal women were also vulnerable for violence.

Kaur (2002) has mentioned that tribal women were also exposed to sexual exploitation in Indian enclaves. It can be assumed that the same has happened in the case of Muslim women in Bangladeshi enclaves. During the fieldwork, an 80-year-old Muslim man shared me his experience of Hindu violence on the Muslim residents of Bangladeshi enclave, thus it can be assumed that the same has happened in the case of Muslim women of Bangladeshi enclave (see chapter 3, section 3.3.3). But any narrative to support the claim could not be provided due to lack of proper narrative of Muslim women. In chapter 5, it is mentioned that due to positionality different problems I had to face for interviewing Muslim women which makes the knowledge limited regarding some sensitive issues. However, it can be argued that fear of religious violence was a part of everyday life of women.

#### **4.2.4 Everyday Anxiety and Fear:**

As enclaves were lawless and there was no electricity too, so the image of the enclave in the minds of women was created and filtered by fear of violence. Women felt unsafe to be move outside of their homes. They found it easier to keep themselves away from the places where they could be seen by the possible attackers. In everyday activity, women did not go out of their home except in the day time and except for any extremely important works such as -agricultural activity. The agricultural fields are mostly located close to their homes and women used to go out of the places with the other family members so that they could be saved from the attackers.

Due to their gender-specific vulnerability, women's spatial mobility and access of space were very limited even on occasion. If they go to any public places for socio-cultural gathering like local fair, kirtans, they are likely to go to this places chaperoned by their husband or any other male member of their family for a very



limited time<sup>14</sup>. The limited use of public space and exclusion can be referred to as a “virtual curfew”- where women lived a negotiated version of their mundane living (Kinsey 1984; quoted in Koskela 1999 p.113). During ethnography, it is found that most of the women have never visited their nearby market in their lifetime and their every necessary thing including their personal clothes were bought by their husbands. Women always lived within their home and adjacent to their homes. If women tried to be present in public places, such as the market, they were orally abused. They were terribly abused by the strangers as well as by their spouses. In this context Bindubala, a 60 years old widow of shared her experience.

*"Here, women do not go to the market. Our husbands do not allow us to go to the market. In fact, women are not allowed to attend any social or religious programs. If we want to go, we need to take permission from our husbands. We cannot go anywhere on our own wishes. I was never allowed by my husband. I was not even allowed to attend the local fair [socio-cultural gathering]. If I had a wish for it, my husband used to use bad words"* (Female, 70 years, Nolgram enclave, Primary Survey, December2018)

The above narrative indicates that women’s everyday life was restricted within the four walls of their home. If they want to go to the public spaces outside of their enclave, they are never allowed. Fear of violence haunts these residents women everyday and thus, restricts them within their own home. Basu (2011) has also explained that women did not have the freedom of movement as a feeling of insecurity always haunted them.

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<sup>14</sup> Here the distinction of public and private space is blurred. In rural enclaves, the major portion of the places are used for agricultural purpose, fishing etc and these are private property owned by the farmers of the enclaves. And there is no market or proper roads or schools which can be considered as public spaces. So the spatial division of public-private which is mostly used in urban context does not fit here. However, what I meant here is the distinction of ‘Ghore’ [inside of the home] and Baire [outside of the home]. Outside the home indicates all the places except the home which are used by collectively, except home; be it an agricultural field, a fishing pond, a very narrow earthen road, a market outside the enclave, a commonplace of socio-cultural or political gatherings inside the enclave or outside the enclave etc.

Women perceive themselves to be at more risk after the dark. As enclaves remained at the edge of the state, there is no infrastructural development inside enclave; as a result, the enclaves were not electrified. As there was no electricity in the enclaves, the enclave got covered with darkness and due to these fact women's life becomes highly constrained within their home. And the location of their residence made their life further complicated. When a Bangladeshi enclave woman was asked that how does it feel to live in the enclave she shared her experience of everyday life in this context-

*“How would I feel? Can’t you see how the place is! Everywhere there is only darkness. There is no light. There is nothing. It’s almost impossible to go outside after dark. You can see the border is so close to the place. You can’t say who in the midst of darkness will pull your hands and sell you on the other side (laughs).”*

(Female, 50 years, Purba Bakhalirchora enclave, Primary Survey, December 2018)

The above narrative indicates darkness intensifies women's fear of violence and exploitation and reducing their mobility. It also reveals that women's vulnerability and fear also increased because of the closeness of the border. The enclave which is very close to the border is more prone to sexual exploitation. The closeness of the border has raised fear of trafficking among enclave’s women. During the fieldwork, I was perceived as a trafficker by the women of an enclave (see chapter 5). This also supports that women in the enclaves are exposed to human trafficking. Such type of threat with the absence of electricity increases the chances of attack, therefore women avoided going out after dark and their lives are largely confined in their homes after evening. In this sense night is social construction (Koskela 1999). Koskela rightly contends that it is a social night which makes resident cautious as to how to behave and what to expect from men to behave (ibid). In this sense, it is the social night

which makes enclave's women aware and to avoid going outside after dark. Studies also confirm that darkness changes women's perception of space and reduces their spatial mobility (Valentine 1989). Not only darkness, but even improper lighting also causes increase attack on women and reduction of spatial mobility (Heing and Maxfield 1978, cited in Valentine 1989). Enclave's women's spatial use of public space was initiated in the morning and terminated as the evening draws in. However, men can move anywhere accompanied by their cycles or bikes and with the help of torches as they did not have the fear of sexual violence.

All these incidents had a profound impact on women's mobility and spatial behaviour. On one hand, gendered violence and lawlessness on the other affected them. Their fear prompted them to be confined within their home and on the contrary, masculine control over enclave and its various public spaces were established. The masculine control over space is exerted very strongly that they never allowed women in any activities which takes place in public space. Women are increasingly become excluded from the public spaces inside enclave and outside enclaves. Sibley's remarks can be put here that "exclusions take place routinely, without most people noticing" (1995, Quoted in Koskela 1999 p.121).

Women's traditional role and their bodily vulnerability with the association of male restriction had constructed this boundary between 'Ghar' [home] and 'Gharer baire' [outside of the home]. This gendered nature of the boundary between home and outside the home is not a physical one but metaphorical, fluid and is constructed in temporal extent and may be subverted in time lattice too. As the day starts, this fluid metaphorical boundary is open for women to invade but becomes acute with the reduction of visibility after sunset.

#### **4.2.5 Enclave Council and Gendered Exclusion:**

The previous section illuminates gender violence and its effect on everyday life of the women of enclaves. Now, this section focuses on the connection of exclusion of women from political activities of enclaves and their subordination. It shows that fear of violence and other restrictions on women has produced and reproduced enclave's space in a gendered way. The way the enclave and its outside space are used by women shows patriarchal domination. It is argued that women's limited mobility exclude them from the different arena's of power politics in the enclaves by which masculine control over territory is exerted. Women are not only excluded from public places, but they are also excluded from political issues, and such gendered exclusion deploys women's subordination and male supremacy.

As the enclaves remained un-governed by India or Bangladesh [before enclave exchange], the residents of enclave realised a need to administrating the enclave. To administer enclave resident and to solve various issues such as land registration, maintaining law and order etc enclave residents established various councils and unions to administer their own resident. The enclaves which are of mostly bigger in size, a local governance system was built there by the residents of those enclaves. This was quite similar to the local panchayats of India or Bangladesh. They followed a democratic way of administrating it and consequently initiated an election to select the members of the councils. And the election procedure was similar to that of India or Bangladesh. Dashirchora, a former Indian enclave was such an example of that. Dashirchora enclave council had a governing body just like the host country's or parent country's administrative council, consisting one chairman, 4 vice-chairman's and 9 panchayats. The chairman acted like a head minister whom everyone must

obey. All the members of Dashirchora enclave council were selected by enclave residents.

However, what is tried to be conveyed here that, the women were excluded from the election and the political system. They were excluded on the basis of their gendered identity. One may find their gender-based exclusion is irrelevant, as the enclaves were not administrated by their parent or home state. Although the enclave councils were not connected to the power politics in a broad sense, it was equally powerful to influence enclave residents' life. In fact, by such a system enclave men could control over the resources inside the enclaves. It is argued that such gender-based exclusion of women from the political system of enclave subordinate women and a masculine control over the enclave is exerted. The following narrative dictated by a former Indian enclave resident who lives in Dinhata settlement camp validates my argument.

*Q: Did women participate in the election or in voting?*

*A: "No. We did not include women."*

*Q: Why?*

*A: "Because enclave residents [men] thought that if women will be given the voting right, they must have to move outside of their home. They have to cross the boundary of their home [simanar baire jete hobe] and go to the polling booth. But, there was no administration; if something wrong happened who would be responsible for this. For example, in India, women are visible in public places even at 12 a.m at night. But in our enclaves, you will never find a woman after evening. Women do not go outside as evening draws in [sondha par hole kono mohila baire bar hobe na]. As there was no administration, who would take the charge if someone exploits them. Who would save them! There was no one to save them. That's why women are kept under the veil [Seijnno tader porday rakha hoyeche]<sup>15</sup>. They were not provided with any*

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<sup>15</sup> In this context 'veil' denotes the bordering of women. He indicates that they were reserved within the boundaries of their home.

*facilities. They were not given election right, because if it was given to them, it might be possible that they could contest the election. And if she wins, the competition level will be heightened. It may cause another problem. Above all, if women become chairman, or vice-chairman, or panchayat and give a verdict, it may cause her another trouble. If enclave residents disagree with her judgement, she could be targeted and be sexually victimised. Then, who would be responsible for this! So, it's better to keep them away from all this. No Vote, nothing for them."*

(Male, 40 years, Dinahata, Primary Survey, August 2018)

The narrative illustrates the gendering of political activity and space. Three aspects are visible from the above narrative, first, that women were vulnerable for exploitation and their mobility was restricted. Second, Women were excluded because their active political involvement required them to be present in public places, maybe even after dark. But, the women did not have permission to be available in public spaces. So their gendered vulnerability and their restriction on public space were used as a justification by which men excluded women from the public and political domain. And third, women were excluded because the men of the enclaves wanted to control over the enclave alone. This shows the hegemonic masculinity and monopoly in enclaves by whom they tried to dominate women and space. The pattern of fear among the women reflects that fear was patterned in the socio-political-spatial context. Gendered fear makes women powerless on the contrary men use this fear as an instrument to dominate over women. It was a masculine strategy to gain power and control enclave's internal power structure. Channa's (1997; cited in Paul 2011) remark can be mentioned here that the exercise of power and the consequential unequal power relations are constructed in the way gender is accomplished in space. Internal politics of enclaves shows that women were marginalised by the masculine activities and patriarchy. They were not only socially marginalised but politically too.

Women were kept outside the prism of power politics and they never had the freedom to choose for their own. Their everyday political geography was under the layer of male domination where they live as an inferior political being. Undoubtedly, the power politics was masculinised in the enclave, where women could not control anything. The public place was dominated by men, as well as public politics too. The above narrative also indicates that it was also a male strategy to minimise the number of candidates so that women could not become an obstacle for controlling the power over the territory. Women's fear of gender violence because of the absence of law caused social exclusion in a public-private sense on one hand and denying their political significance resulted in political exclusion within the enclave on the other. Shirlow and Pain (2003) rightly contended that the ways location and situation of fear of crime are patterned, reflected and reinforced by the particularities of place, has a key role in the patterns of marginalisation and exclusion.

#### **4.3 Exploring Enclave Life through Marriage:**

This section identifies the essential connection of marriage, migration and border in the transnational context of enclaves. It provides scope for a micro study in a transnational context which highlights the dualism of patrivirilocal marriage. Patrivirilocal marriage is where woman move upon marriage to live with her husband (Palriwala & Uberoi 2008). Two-dimensional roles or marriage is delineated here –as such women are subordinated by marriage and at the same time marriage becomes way out of socio-political subordination. Here, the focus is to emphasise on marital issues of enclave residents, particularly of women because marriage could drastically change the social and political status of women and thus their everyday life. Marriage is an important aspect for scrutinising the women's life as marriage acts as an

inevitable event of their life which can change their socio-political and economic aspect of everyday living by marriage migration. It truly acts like a threshold point which could bring a change in the everyday life of resident either by sending them or receiving them.

Besides the above-stated causes, women's marriage is important because women's reproductive labour has sustained enclave's biological and social life. Because when women came into enclave by marriage migration their reproductive labour also moved into the enclave. Besides these, cross-border marriage played a significant role in building a social bond as women were sole in charge of this maintenance of the social bond. Cross border marriage between enclave-host resident is a tactic for negotiating everyday marginalisation. That's why marriage provides an important arena to investigate women's life. However women not only as a gendered category is discussed, rather it emphasises on the intersection of religion, and ethnicity with gender in the context of marriage.

Enclaves are inhabited by different cultural groups and hence, marriage rituals and customs can show the differences in marriage practises and thus in the women's life. Because the intersection of race class ethnicity nationality sexuality together determined resident's 'social location' in power hierarchy and their action (Mahler and Passer 2001)<sup>16</sup>. Based on shared geographic reality, enclave residents are a community but when caste ethnicity religion class operates; their experience can show a rupture in the reproduction of everyday life. In everyday life, almost every woman has similar kinds of sufferings, but a great distinction can be seen at the time of marriage which determines women's life. This section takes a view of the marriage as

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<sup>16</sup> Social location refers to person's position within power hierarchies created through historical, political, economic, geographic, kinship-based and other social stratifying factors (Mahler and Passer 2001)



phenomenon from two aspects- one, marriage is explicated as general, that is, how marriage functions as a social and kinship builder for all enclave dweller and its inevitable consequence on women' life. Second, what happens when culture and custom intersect with the marriage of different communities and how women's life gets shaped by it.

#### **4.3.1 Women and Marriage Migration:**

There are notable works which focuses on transnational marriage and its global links. Most of them have tried to explore socio-economic aspects (Palriwala & Uberoi 2008, Constable 2005; Williems 2010; Kaur 2012 ). In recent decades there is a shift in viewing women's marriage migration from just as passive actors of migration to a different tone, where women's choice and the agency has been taken into consideration. Recent research has also taken a shift towards the understanding of citizenship aspiration and marriage as a choice of migration, for example, Meszaros (2017) has shown in her study that marriage migration is an attractive strategy for Filipino women because this gives an opportunity to get American citizenship access, thus a major economic advancement. Piper and Lee (2016) emphasises on women's reproductive and social labour that they provide in the social development of the receiving society by marriage migration. However, this section tries to find the bordering aspect of marriage migration associated with enclaves. The emphasisation on political aspects of migration is crucially linked with the typical geographical setting overlapped by the geopolitical nature of the enclaves.

But before proceeding to the discussion it is imperative to conceptualise some of the terms and customs related to marriage which are used throughout this section. The terms such as cross border marriage migration, and sometimes enclave-host country

marriage are used to denote the marital relationship between the enclave and host countries residents. As enclaves are foreign bodies in another country's territory, hence marriage between enclave and host country can be referred to as cross-border migration. Other terms, such as international or transnational marriage also can be used in this context. Patrivirilocal marriage is predominant in the enclaves where women moved to their marital home upon marriage. Similar to the surrounding places, usually homogamous marriage is the most preferred choice of marriage.<sup>17</sup>

Hence there is no questioning of conjugal ties between Hindu and Muslims or Hindu Rajbanshi and Tribal *Oraon* or Muslims and Tribal *Oraon*. Every religious or cultural community try to build a marital relationship with the resident of their own groups of the resident. However, marriage happened between host residents and enclave resident who bear a different political identity although the socially and culturally heterogamous marriage is not accepted. Therefore, cross-border marriage can be used here to denote the marriage between the enclave and the host country. However, the use of enclave-host state marriage seems more appropriate in this case, so the effort is to emphasise on enclave-host state marriage.

#### **4.3.2 Mobility through Marriage across Enclave-Host Country:**

Marriage within enclave and host resident exhibits cross-border marriage in a transnational context in understanding the importance of marriage in building social ties across the border. Marriage acted as the most important phenomenon in the life of enclave resident which could change their life in various ways. Enclave resident had to fully depend on the host country's infrastructure, economy and as well as on the

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<sup>17</sup> Homogamous marriage denotes similarities of age, ethnicity, religion, nationality, educational attainment between partners (Flot & Gwenola 2017) and Heterogamous marriage is opposite to it.

host resident for social upgradation (see chapter 3). It has been mentioned in the previous chapter that enclave residents were fully dependant on the mercy of host resident in order to live a decent life. Hence, the most popular strategy, in this case, was to ascertain the marital relationship by which they could contact and be connected with the host resident. They are keen on seizing the opportunity for socio-economic-political improvements. Similar to the other societies in the enclaves too marriage is an important arena for achievement, consolidation, affirmation, of upward social mobility and it enhances a familial social capital (Bourdieu 1977, cited in Palriwala and Uberoi 2008).

For enclave resident, a good relationship could be a medium by which they could try to reduce their everyday baggage. For instance, if an Indian woman comes in a Bangladeshi enclave by marriage, her husband could use her wife's natal family's address in getting an Indian Voter card or Aadhar card although by illegal means<sup>18</sup>. Such identity cards could help him to get him some help from India. It could help him to prove their status as an Indian if he migrates to various Indian cities for work. It could save him from various legal difficulties. In this way, patrivirilocal marriage was used as a ladder by which enclave resident can maintain a connection with the host resident- who were established in the upper status in the social hierarchy. It can be referred to as familial tactic of negotiating borders. Williems (2010) in her study, which focused marriage of transnational refugee community, articulated that marriage is an important strategy and tactic used by refugee families to bring family members in safety and to strengthen and maintain the community.

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<sup>18</sup> Aadhar card is a 12 digit unique identity number which is obtained by residents of India. It is introduced in 2009 and used as a proof of residence of India. Since the introduction of Aadhar, it is widely used by the Government of India to provide various services of the state-for instance: domestic LPG scheme, MGNREGA, passports, banks, telecom services etc.

Furthermore, cross-border marriage [enclave-host country] helps to strengthen the relationship by which enclave residents could escape from various kinds of vulnerabilities. Conway's (2007, cited in Williams) findings can be mentioned here that migration often appears as an option for the less privileged who, even if they never migrate themselves, shaped and altered by the migration of others. Enclave's women's marriage migration appeared as an option which altered and shaped those women's family in various ways. In case there is any political violence inside the enclave, they could flee and take shelter into their daughter's marital home or daughter-in-law's natal home in the host country. It helped them to reduce their geographic baggage and they could feel comparatively safe and secure (Rabbani 2017).

However, by such marriage migration women who entered into enclave got victimised by the patriarchal nature of society. The most pathetic is that the mainland or host country's women who married inside the enclave, they were hardly aware of this disruption. When they started adjusting with their new life with a different socio-political milieu, they discovered themselves to be trapped within the enclave. Unfortunately, neither the bride could do anything or their family as they were already married; and it is her responsibility by any means to live and adjust with her new family with the new place. The following story of Kabita reveals the pain of getting married into an enclave. Kabita, a Bangladeshi enclave woman from Pashchim Bakhali-chora describes her sufferings and pain-

*“Most of the women who are married here did not know that it is an enclave. In fact, I also did not know that. My father also migrated from Bangladesh. He thought that these [enclave] resident must have bought lands inside India but he never realised that it's not India, rather it is a Bangladesh enclave. After my marriage, I came to know that it is an enclave. If I would know this*

*before my marriage, I would have never get married here. I did not get anything after settling here. I had my ration card [Public Distribution System] in India, but it could not be used here. My ration card, my identity all become invalid. Later, my brother started using my ration card. Sometimes my father supplied me kerosene oil from PDS shop.”*

(Female, 50 years, Dinhata, Primary Survey, November 2018)

The above narratives depict how unconscious women are about enclaves and how they experienced the vulnerabilities. It can be stated that the patrilocal residence of the married women was the major reason for women's oppression (Watson 1991, cited in Constable 2005). In this way, marriage migration of women inside enclave always associated with kinds of hypogamy – social hypogamy, political hypogamy and spatial hypogamy. <sup>19</sup>Women's social status got degraded after entering into enclave compared to the surrounding host country as she is no more a mainland resident who bears all rights. Rather she has become a stateless person who has no citizenship, not even basic human rights. It is argued that the combining role of patriarchy and bordering had acted silently but with a profound effect which was most detrimental and dominant on the structure of women's life of enclaves. A close examination of women's life course can demonstrate that neither patriarchal power nor politics acts significantly rather women's everyday subordination in the enclave is a result of the combined effect of bordering and patriarchy. Sukhmoni, another woman from Bangladeshi enclave shared her feelings in this context-

*“I never heard about ‘chit’. If I knew, I never would get married here. My parents were also not aware of this. I found it after a few years of marriage. But what can I do then? I was supposed to adjust here. My father suggested me if I could make my Voter ID by using the address of the natal home. But I could not as I lost my*

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<sup>19</sup> Hypergamy indicated marriage of women into a higher socio-economic group, and hypogamy to its opposite.

*rights.*" (Female, 35 years, Dinjata, Primary Survey, November 2018)

It shows the differences of experience of the married couple that is-- men usually encountered enclave by birth, and but married women encountered it by migration. By birth, she is capable of claiming the rights, but because of patriarchal structure and the peculiarity of the space, she is subjected to sufferings in her everyday life. It shows that their ability to take their own decision was greater before getting married in the enclave. But their ability to live their own life declined after getting married in the enclaves. It also indicates patriarchal domination that a woman is bound to live with her husband irrespective of her own wish of not to live in her husband's home. As her husband's fate is "trapped by the lottery of their birth", (Hirst and Thompson 1996; cited in Paasi 2012) consequently she is attached to her husband's fate. It clearly shows the mutual effects of bordering and patriarchy in shaping the lives of women in the enclaves.

#### **4.3.3 Marriage as an Arena of Powerlessness:**

As marriage can bring social and political upliftment, social security etc, enclave resident was desperate to build a marital relationship with their host country. But this strategy always did not work, many host resident had an objection to marrying women of enclaves. In the surrounding areas too the women have similar social status, and in that sense, every woman should have equal demand in the local marriage market. But it was their geographical location that determines their marriage and the life that comes with it upon migration. As they belong to an enclave, host resident was reluctant to marry them. Host resident feared that if they marry a woman of enclave who has no citizenship, could bring trouble with her into his home. They didn't want

to accept them as wives; even though agreed, they could cancel it anytime. In many cases, they delegate such ties.

Such delegation is reflected in the marriage of Amina, a female Bangladeshi enclave dweller. She belongs to Moshaldanga enclave and her marriage got fixed with a male mainland resident of Dinahata, India, but he refused to marry her on the day of marriage (Anandabazar Patrika 2015). As expected, it was her identity and her residential location that led to such dismissal of marriage. The groom disagreed to marry her as he realised that his family might be in trouble if he marries a woman of an enclave. He feared that they may face citizenship issues and this may push them into great trouble. The marriage was cancelled and the woman on the same day and she had to marry another guy who belonged to another Bangladeshi enclave.

The above narrative indicates helplessness and emotional sufferings, particularly of women for which they had to be prepared at any time. Two contradictory images are evident here, one, that clearly indicates the powerlessness of enclave resident; on the contrary, it indicates that the host country's resident had better control over the situations. Women felt powerless as their agency get limited in relation to the political status of the places. Statelessness is experienced by enclave residents not only in political terms but on other social sphere and enclave resident have no choice except to bear this. It reflects the power structures of the enclave and mainland resident within which they are positioned in a completely opposite direction. It can be stated that the resident irrespective of their own efforts are situated within power hierarchy that they did not construct (Mahler and Passer 2001) but were affected by it. Unfortunately, women were the extreme sufferers in the power hierarchy.

#### **4.3.4 Dowry the Game Changer:**

Here dowry is explored as a 'game changer' which is involved with socio-political spatial hypergamy and hypogamy of enclave women. Just like women of many disadvantaged societies, marriage provides an easier route to gain citizenship for enclave women. In this context, examples have been provided from Bangladesh enclaves, as fieldwork is carried only in Bangladeshi enclaves. Marriage, as have mentioned not only functions as a biological and social means but political too. As enclave resident's everyday life exhibits a very strong dependency on host resident, they always wanted to make strong ties with the resident for their socio-political needs; and marital bonds with host resident serves the best strategy for this. Enclave resident desperately wants to strengthen kinship ties with the host resident but host resident was unwilling to marry their women.

In the local marriage markets, they are the least preferred because of their political status. The host resident did not want to accept enclave's women as they did not bear any citizenship, besides their social status was much lower compared to their host residents. Host residents were also worried about the emerging issues related to marriage which they have to face if marries enclave's women. The most critical issue was that the enclave's women did not have any identity cards or any proof which could prove their citizenship status. This type of issues was not such critical in the early decades. The problem got intensified as India introduced various methods for identifying her citizens as such Voter Ids, AADHAR cards etc. As these identity cards are essential for getting any state services, it has an impact on marriage too. Indian host resident denied marrying enclave women as they do not have this identity cards and marriage without this can led problems in future.



In such case, it is the host country's groom's responsibility to make arrangement for identity cards for his wife in illegal ways and in doing so the groom needs lots of money to pay a bribe to the concerning authority. But who wants to spend extra expenditure for such activities! Inevitably this led the groom's [host] family to ask for huge dowries from enclave resident [in terms of cash] during the marriage. This led to a great increase in dowry demands among Hindu and Muslims enclave dwellers, for example, an enclave woman's family had to pay double amount of dowry to the groom's family of mainland area. The following example illustrates this (Fieldnote Nolgram enclave, January 2018)-

*Q: 'I have heard that Indian residents used to ask for a huge dowry to marry the girls of enclave? Is it true?*

*A: Yes, absolutely. You are right. They used to ask for a huge amount of dowry. I had to give a huge dowry during my daughter's marriage.*

*Q: How much you paid?*

*A: I gave 100000Rs to my daughter's husband's family. But you know, if I would be an Indian, the same marriage would cost 30000-50000Rs of dowry.*

*Q: Why so?*

*A: Simply because we are enclave people. No state ever had any concern for us. We did not have identity cards, ration card [for getting PDS], Aadhar, PAN [Permanent account number] etc. So, Indians always used to hesitate to marry our daughters.'*

(Male, 60 years, Dinhata, Primary Survey, August 2018)

So the difference between a female of an enclave and host country is clear. Compared to the mainland women, enclave's women had to face exorbitant dowry demand irrespective of the similar educational status, or religion, or economic class or attractiveness between them. Unlike mainland women, enclave's women had to cross and negotiate multiple boundaries at the time of their marriage. If the enclave woman's family was able to pay the double amount of dowry or increased dowry, marriage could be happened otherwise enclave women either had to marry someone

from other enclaves or to wait for a longer time for accumulating money for a dowry. In such circumstances, women were doubly disadvantaged in the marriage market, on one hand, they could not marry into mainland because of the lack of citizenship, on the other; they could not afford exorbitant dowry demands. In that case, the women who married to another enclave, her entire life is spent in precariousness and in the lowest status among all.

Women's fate by marriage not only determined by their economic status but other intersectionality, such as disability also influenced their life. Enclave residents, both men and women's demand were very less in the local marriage market. Physical disability, along with their political status made them most inferior in the marriage market. The disabled women, with the hallmark of the enclave, were the least powered among all other groups. Consequently, they have nothing to do except adapting to their marginalised life. These women, though their numbers might be very small among all the groups compel me to reflect on this issue. During the fieldwork, I met Krishna, a physically handicapped woman from former Bangladeshi enclave, who was compelled to settle inside an enclave. Her natal family shared the problems they faced due to her inferior status. Her family had a problem to find any groom from outside, as she is the least preferred, because of her inability and non-citizenship status. She got married inside the same enclave with a huge amount of dowry and led her life with extreme marginalisation.

#### **4.3.5 Reduction in Dowry Demands as a Coping Tactic:**

Dowry demands not only created problems among the women of enclaves, but also another role. As the enclaves are space where the law did not operate, and residents live a bare life (Shewly 2012), the host resident who is aware of the typicality of this

space, they do not want to marry their daughter into the enclave. Most of the time, resident of host countries were unaware about the enclave specific problems, but later, when enclave issues are spread among other residents by media, host resident become reluctant to send their daughters into the enclave. If the host resident would have strongly disagreed to send their daughters in the enclave, it might cause several difficulties.

If host countries women are not sent by marriage migration into enclave then there is the only option for the maintenance of demographic and social structure in the enclaves that is enclave men would have to marry only the enclave's women from other enclaves. But as enclave resident do not accept inter-caste or inter-religion or socially heterogamous marriage there would be shortages of brides in the enclaves. In such a case, there might have been a great disruption on the demography of the enclave resident. In fact, enclave resident's strategy to overcome enclave's various vulnerability by making marital bonds with the host resident could not be successful. But it never happened. Enclave resident reduced their dowry demands during marriage to attract brides. Kaur (2012) in her study also finds that in the case of "less valued" males, that is who are poor, unemployed, disabled, or socially disgraced and could not find brides from the local area they accept dowryless marriages for their individual needs.

On the contrary, there are many families in mainland India who want to marry their daughters inside India but unable to pay huge dowries. Thus, those poor families from surrounding Indian places send their daughter inside enclave upon marriage migration. Current research in the Indian context has shown the similar kinds of phenomenon that dowryless marriage and/or less expenditure in marriage and

shortages of bride augments across the region and heterogamous marriage (Kaur 2010, 2012; Choudhuri and Mohan 2011; Mazumdar et al 2013). Mazumdar et al's work demonstrates the reasons for marriage between Kerala women and Mysore men are the acceptance of smaller dowry by Mysore male. Quite similarly, the lack of bride in the northern Indian states causes a welcome to dowry less marriage and consequently women's spatial mobility. Kaur (2010) has described marriage as a strategy for many Indian Bengali and Bangladeshi Bengali women as it often takes place without a dowry. Quite similar to Kaur's study, poor parents of surrounding Indian villages who cannot pay the exorbitant demands of dowry they send their daughters in a completely different world of subordination by marriage migration to avoid the burden of dowry marriage. Consequently, women suffer from the loss of their rights and living with abject subordination. It clearly depicts the significance of dowry marriage and its consequence on women during the marriage.

#### **4.3.6 Marriage of *Adivasis*:**

At present dowry has spread its root to almost every community in India or other South Asian communities. Although previously it was limited within upper caste Hindus, later the other Hindu caste residents, as well as Muslims also accepted this practice. Being a part of India and Bangladesh, dowry is an inevitable part of enclave resident too. But the intersection of culture can show a different result of dowry marriage too.

The Hindu and Muslim dwellers of the enclave are the victims of excessive dowry demands, while the tribals or indigenous *Oraons* are left out of this practice. There is no such custom of dowry among *Oraons*. While the *Oraons* are influenced in several aspects by the neighbouring community in their social and cultural practices such as

language, worshipping but, their rituals and customs related to marriage has not been changed much. *Oraons* resident has patriarchal nature of society but they impose fewer restrictions on women. Unlike other cultural communities of the enclaves or surrounding places, gender inequality is lesser among the *Oraons* which is reflected in their customs. Their typical custom of dowry-less marriage brought relief to the women.

The *Oraons* of Pashchim Bakhairchora Bangladeshi enclaves are extremely impoverished than the other enclave dwellers. In case if there is any prevalence of dowry marriage, it might cause severe problems during marriage. But, absence of dowry among them makes their path easy for sending their daughters outside the enclave. They did not have any problems to marry their daughter into mainland India. In this context, a tribal woman from Pashchim Bakhairchora enclave shared her feelings of being a tribal enclave dweller.

*Q: Were not you adivasi and be a Hindu then would you have an advantage in your life?*

*A: "No, it would have been more pathetic. You know why? because we don't have sufficient land. We are very poor resident. If we had not been an adivasi, and be a Hindu then we had to spend a lot during my daughter's wedding. You can see the Hindus; they demand a lot of money during the wedding. How we would have given so much money. In that case, then my daughter would never get married. I am privileged that I am adivasi. No lands, No transaction. We just only have to give our daughters marriage. We don't have to give any dowry."*

(Female, 50 years, Dinhata, Primary Survey, November 2018)

Her narratives clearly depict that not all the women of enclave have the same level of difficulties in life. Although they belong to the same political community [that is an enclave community] their life experience differs with the intersection of cultural

norms among communities. It is obviously their cultural norms that make her feel privileged, irrespective of their lowest economic and political status. Tribal enclave women encountered fewer barriers in terms of migrating out of enclave. They have more opportunities to be assimilated with the Indian resident by marriage and strengthening social ties with an Indian resident.

After the dissuasions, it would not be wrong to propound dowry as a game changer. In most of the enclave resident's life, dowry had a vital role in deciding their marital place and hence their everyday life. On one hand, excessive dowry demands outside the enclave, on the other smaller amount of dowry inside enclave has compelled women in abject subordination. Again, it is the absence of dowry which blessed tribal women with an opportunity to permanently subvert the enclave-host country border and to live an ordinary citizen's life.

#### **4.4 Domination Vs Resistance -the Other Parts of Women's Life:**

Throughout the above sections, violence, oppression and subordination of women in the enclaves have been discussed. But, now the focus is on the other part of lives of women where women not only lived as powerless beings, rather they have shown resistance against state power, male domination and unwanted interference of the host state. There are notable works which show that women are not only subjected to violence, but they have a role to resist against the domination (Manchanda 2001; Abdi 2006). This section is an attempt to portray the narratives of resistance which reflects the agency of women in decision making. Although women in the enclaves are relatively less powerful than the male counterparts, the representation of women as mere victims of violence is problematic. The study found that women as not only the

victims of male domination and violence; rather they have a role to cope the enclave specific vulnerabilities.

#### **4.4.1 Resistance against Host Country's Domination:**

Although the fear of violence has restricted women's mobility in the enclaves, they have protested against state domination in their own way. In the previous section, it has been discussed that due to the absence of law enclaves have become a criminal space which resulted in the interference of border guard with the residents of the enclave. In India, the security agents/border guards of India had an important role in the Bangladeshi enclave dwellers life. The border guards were legally unable to enter into the enclaves but they did not bother it. They used to illegally enter into the enclave [before the exchange] and created troubles in the enclave dwellers life (see chapter 3, section 3.2.3). Indian border guards illegally used to enter into the residence of the Bangladeshi enclave dwellers and search their houses. Such actions by the security agents created a sense of powerlessness among the enclave dwellers and most of the time they were unable to protest against this. But Tulsi Orao's narrative reflects that her feminine identity and domestic responsibility gave her a chance to raise her voice.

*“Once BSF came to search my house. They told me that they want to search my house. But I did not allow them to do so. I told them that I would not allow any male person to enter my house. They were repeatedly asking for that but I did not agree. They were informed by someone that there are some smuggled items in the house. I told them- ‘if you have such information then bring your head officer into my home’. They replied to me that no officer would come. They asked- ‘Why are you arguing with me’. I answered- “Should not I argue then! It’s not you rather we are supposed to aware of this if there is any smuggled item in my house. Once my brother had gone to market to sell crops but he*

*was suspected and he was not allowed to go to the market, then why should I allow you to enter into my house.' However, after a long argument, I was agreed but I told him angrily that it would be very bad you if you are unable to find the smuggled items in my house. They entered my house but could not find anything. Then they apologised. However, when they were leaving, they asked me for a glass of water; but I did not give them water. How can they expect me to serve them water after such harassment."*

(Female, 50 years, Paschim Bakhairchora, Primary Survey, November 2018)

Her narrative indicates that women also had a voice in the enclaves. The discussion in the first section of the chapter ( section 4.2.2) shows that due to gender domination and male violence women are powerless in the enclaves and their life is also restricted within the private space of home but they yet have resisted against the oppressor. The narrative shows that the domestic sphere where women are supposed to spend her major portion of the day too can be a place to resist against all odds. Usually, an ordinary village woman is expected to obey the person who is comparatively powerful than her. In Tulsi's case too, she was also supposed to obey the security agent and to show a caring attitude towards the guards. But her denial against the illegal and unnecessary entrance of the guards on one hand, and her rejection of serving water to the border guard shows that she not only tried to resist, but she also tried whatever was possible for her at that moment.

However, enclave dweller's life was not only influenced by security agents of the host country rather, other state officials also brought troubles into their life. As the enclaves are scattered through various parts in the borderland area, the host countries state agents often used to enter into the enclaves for the purpose of work. Legally the state officials could not enter into the enclaves but whenever they found it necessary to enter into enclaves, they have entered. But such actions of the host country's state



agents often brought troubles in the enclave dwellers life. Most of the time the enclave dwellers could not raise voice but they have tried to resist against such actions. Women have also shown such kind of resistance. And the way women resisted against such domination was quite different from their male counterparts. Anita Barman, a Bangladeshi enclave dweller shared me the story of her own way of resistance.

*“Once I wasn’t in my home. I went to visit my daughter’s marital home. As I returned I saw that many of the trees in my home are fell down. Later I came to know that Indian officials came and had cut the tress. They were laying electricity wires in the surrounding Indian village but they were facing problems due to the presence of my tress [Her residence is located at the junction of enclave-host country boundary]. As there was no one in the home they cut the tress. I burst into tears seeing this. They cut 22 tress that were there. I cried a lot. I was feeling very pity. I was feeling very angry also thinking of what should I do now. Therefore, later on, I started hooking electricity. You know, in this enclave nobody has electricity in their house except me. Hearing this one day, Indian officials came to my house. I was sleeping in peace on my bed switching on the fan. They came and started questioning as what is happening there. I also gave them a befitting reply. I replied to them that you had cut all my trees without my permission then should not I deserve this much? Then they left. After that, I also went to the local Panchayat [in India]. I charged them-what do they think of themselves! Aren't the enclave residents human! They destroyed our property without even informing us. Since then nobody dares to speak anything.” (Female, 55 years, Purba Bakhairchora, Primary Survey, November 2018)*

Anita Barman’s narrative reveals several facets of enclave life. First, it is clear that host officers unnecessary actions often created troubles in the lives of the enclave dwellers. Second, it shows that choosing tactics depends on the situation in everyday life. Third, it reveals that although enclave dwellers are not supposed to get any legal help from host state host residents illegal and unscrupulous action forced them to seek help from host country. And fourth, it illustrates that women have not only lived as a

powerless being rather they have resisted in an exotic way. Her daily life is not an exotic one but she finds a way to resistance in an exotic way. In fact, her resistance was so powerful that she also got an advantage in her life. There was no electricity in any house in the enclaves and no enclave dwellers have even dared for hooking of electricity as they always felt right-less and powerless as compared to their surrounding villages. But, she could able to bring it by raising voice against the opponent.

The situation or the incident may not appear in every enclave dwellers life but it indicates the complexity of the life of living within the multiplicity of the border. The multiplicity of bordering led to an illegal intrusion of host residents in their lives and such an illegal and unwanted involvement of the host residents or officials led the enclave dwellers to resist by any possible means. In fact, such complexity of bordering has led the women also to resist. In Anita's case, it is her emotional engagement with the tress led her to choose such kind of tactic to resist against the domination of the host country. During my interview and participant observation with her, I have seen that she is very fond of the tress. In fact, her action was the result of extreme sufferings which they had to face in everyday life due to the abandonment of the state and peculiar geographical location.

#### **4.4.2 Resistance against Patriarchy and Bordering:**

The intermediate part of this chapter has shown that patrivirilocal marriage and everyday bordering is the reason for extreme sufferings in the daily life of enclave's women. It not only pushed them in abject marginalisation, but it also brought physical violence in their daily life. The discussion on marriage reflects that marriage in the enclaves often caused them torture and violence by their husbands. The marital

violence on women perpetuated because of the harshness of life and lack of any formal institution in the enclaves and patriarchal ideologies. Although patriarchal rules imposed barriers and several difficulties in the lives of women, they tried to break the barriers of patriarchal law and geographical peculiarity. The following story of a Bangladeshi enclave dweller reflects the combining effect of geographical and patriarchal domination and a powerful resistance against it. The following story is about Ratna, who is a tribal woman and was born in India and married in a Bangladeshi enclave. Ranjana, a neighbour of the Ratna dictates me the story-

*"Her[Ratna's] husband used to beat her Everyday. Everyday he would drink and beat her wife. He was a good student of our enclave. He had completed his schooling. But he did not get any job. As an [Bangladeshi] enclave dweller he found it very difficult to get a job in the Indian market. He was frustrated with this and he used to release the frustration upon his wife. Even when his wife got pregnant he did not stop beating him. One day in the evening he started severely beating his wife. His wife could not bear this anymore and ran at our home. She was screaming and was running at us. She has such a big womb. Such a big size! She was running at us with her big womb through the paddy fields. She was seeking help from us. She wants to complain against her husband but who would listen to her. Later she left her marital home and went to her natal home [in India]. Her husband did not try to bring her back into the home. Once few of his family members had gone to Ratna's natal home but Ratna refused to come back. She said- "If I knew before that he is drunker and the place is an enclave I would never get married there. Who wants to be beaten everyday. If my baby is born there, his/her life will be spoiled. I will not go there." Then they came back but Santu never went to convince her wife. She never came back. She did not want to give birth to her child in the enclave. Now the enclave is exchanged but since then no one has gone from here to bring her wife. Now no one knows about her present life. Maybe she has married someone else in India."*

(Female, 27 years, Paschim Bakhaliirchora, Primary Survey, November 2018)

The above narrative reflects the hostile impact of the enclave on women's life. It reveals that women are extremely vulnerable in the enclaves. When women migrate into enclave from their natal home by crossing the enclave-host border they faced the harsh life in the enclaves. Women tend to lose their rights through marriage in the enclaves. On one hand, marriage pushes her to a certain direction on the other hand geographical reality of enclave pushes her to some other. When women attempt to seek any help from the formal institution they hardly have any access to those. Because of the abandonment by the states, lawlessness and lack of presence of any formal institutions such as police, she is unable to find any solution of her. By birth, she is an Indian and can seek justice for such harassment from the state but because of geographical reality, she is unable to get any help from any state. It shows the mutual effects of patriarchy and bordering in the life of women in the enclaves. In enclaves, women are marginalised because of the dual impact of geography and patriarchy. Their spatial and conjugal location left them in dislocation which makes them vulnerable for various kinds of exploitation.

However, Ratna's story reveals that women not only chose to adjust their life in the enclave but they had an agency to live their life. In Ratna's case, she chooses the extreme form of resistance. By not getting any help from formal institutions she left her husband and the enclave. Her geographical location led her to choose the extreme form of resistance. Her situation minimises her agency to seek help from the state but her emotional situation of being a pregnant woman maximises her agency not to come back to her husband's home.

Apart from this, I believe it is her social location (Mahler and Passer 2001) also increased her agency. Being a tribal woman she has a less patriarchal restriction as

compared to caste Hindu and Muslim women which also enabled her to increase her agency and to choose such an extreme form of resistance. Unlike the other women who have adopted the enclave life irrespective of their will to reside Ratna chooses to live a decent life. Patriarchy minimizes women' agency in the enclaves and it seems impossible for most of the women to evade it. However, Ratna's excessive sufferings, social location (Mahler and Passer 2001) in everyday life pushed her to cross the border of enclave and to escape from it.

#### **4.5 Enclave Exchange, De-Borderisation and Everyday Life of Women:**

The above sections discussed everyday life of women in the un-exchanged enclaves, now the focus is to capture the transformative aspects of everyday life of women after the exchange of the enclaves. Exchanges of enclaves have resulted in the de-bordering of the enclaves. Here, de-bordering means the elimination of the political border between enclave and Host state. Thus, the enclaves, as well as the residents, are now part of their host country. Now the resident is not right less and the place is not lawless. So their legal vulnerability is reduced. Now the enclave dwellers are supposed to get legal help from the host state. For instance, before the exchange as the enclaves dwellers could not go to the police, so, women in the enclaves were vulnerable for trafficking of women but now they can seek any help from the state. Due to the absence of legal action, there was no record of trafficking in the enclave but after the exchange, the parents of the victims are coming forward to complain to the police station. Due to such reason, 68 cases of trafficking have been registered within one year after the exchange (Ananadabazar Patrika 2016) and few of them are

brought back into their place. This indicates a positive sign for the women of the enclaves.

Again, the dowry-related issues of marriage are solved to some extent after the exchange. As the enclave dwellers have become citizens of India so they have got an Identity. Now, the Indian host residents cannot ask for huge dowries. So, the former enclave's women do not have to pay huge amount of dowries. The political border is removed; consequently, the former enclave-host border has become permeable to cross.

However, apart from these, their life is still constrained within their home. The effect of 66 years of statelessness or rightlessness has an immense impact on the structure of their life which is still working in their life. As discussed in the previous sections that women's life was limited due to their vulnerability, and enclave exchange could not bring any massive change in their everyday mobility. Their mobility is still constrained because of the effect of former statelessness [de facto]. The outer places of the home are still dominated by men and women's life still encounters a gendered dimension of the border.

#### **4.6 Conclusion:**

After the discussion, it can be said that before the exchange, enclave women's life was encircled with multiple borders. Violence and fear were part of their everyday life and such fear shaped their everyday life. A power game was activated in enclaves which not only use women for epitomising territorial belonging between enclave and host resident, women were also strategically excluded by patriarchal arguments. While the political nature of the land makes enclaves as geopolitical space, women's

differential experience makes it as a gendered space. If territories are an area controlled by a single person or a group (Agnew 2000, cited in Passi 2003) and territorialities refer strategically controlling territories (Paasi 2003), then it can be said that men's control and dominance over enclave's space produces it as a gendered space. This gendered space is bounded by gendered borders enacted by gendered division of space which divides 'Ghore' [home] and 'Baire' [outside home/public]. In this sense, borders are social construction; constructed and modified in everyday activities by individual and collective action.

On the other hand, women's experience of marriage reveals that the border is not only territorial but metaphorical or symbolical; and generated by gender ideologies. It portrays that the border which women negotiated during the marriage is not operated at an equal scale for every cultural group. Border intensifies as cultural and social [patriarchal] norms or customs intersects with politics. There is no imaginative border for the tribal enclave women for invading it permanently by marriage migration. But, Hindu, Muslims and other physically handicapped women had to negotiate numerous borders to transgress it. It is the economic power that enables or disables these women to cross this. If their economic capability is adjusted with the economic demands of the host country's resident, they can transgress the territorial border of enclave and, could escape from the everyday deprivation. Otherwise, they lived life with extreme marginalisation. In this way Marriage migration and border acts in her life provide her with a subordinate life. Apart from violence and subordination of women the chapter also indicates that women are not always powerless in terms of decision making. They have a limited access to public space and limited scope of an agency but when they resisted it was very powerful to change their everyday life.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Reflections from the Fieldwork: Challenges and Issues of Reflexivity and Positionality**

#### **5.1 Introduction:**

This chapter primarily focuses on the issues of doing fieldwork in a volatile space like enclaves. The main aim of this chapter is to present the methodological challenges involved in carrying out fieldwork in the enclaves. Here I intend to touch upon the operational issues of fieldwork in the enclaves which offers multiple challenges for a female researcher. Using personal narratives, I try to raise crucial issues of positionality and reflexivity which has attracted the attention of feminist research in recent years. In this context, I attempt to sketch a picture of the vivid experience of doing fieldwork in the remote and highly securitized border area.

#### **5.2 Positionality & Reflexivity:**

Feminist researchers have urged for reflexive research so that it can be ascertained how the research outcomes come into knowledge production. They suggest to reflect on researcher's personal agency in influencing research outcomes. This section is the reflection of my personal characteristics which had an impact on my research. Being a multiply positioned actor in the field, I had diverse experience in the field. My experience in the field was the outcome of different shades of my socio-cultural and political identity and such identity had an immense impact on my fieldwork. Sometimes, my cultural identity, and sometimes gender identity weight too high that my actions were often politicized during fieldwork. Different aspects of my positionality had a great impact on the research process and outcomes.



Positionalities may include aspects of the identity of the researcher such as race, class, gender, age, sexuality, disability – as well as personal experience of research such as research training, previous projects worked on and the philosophical persuasion of the researcher (Hopkins 2007). Personal characteristics such as appearance, language, class background, educational level, manner, ease of interaction style, age, physical size, gender, etc influence the degree of ease with which ethnographic researcher may be accepted into a situation (Schensul and D.Lecompte 2013). Structural characteristics such as rules regulating the behaviour and interaction of men and women may also affect the possibility of interaction. For example, in rural Mexico the researchers are not easily welcomed especially the female researchers are not welcomed if she lives alone or in a hotel (ibid). Reflexivity is important while doing fieldwork in order to identify and address stemming from a gendered view of the female researcher (Pante 2014). Reflexivity also enables researchers to actively examine the practical and political consequences of one's methodological decisions (ibid). Here I have reflected on the issues raised from my diverse position and identity such as gender, marital status, religion, etc.

### **5.2.1 Gender:**

The gender of the researcher has an impact in carrying out fieldwork, especially women ethnographers became exposed to various kinds of assaults during fieldwork. Sometimes women are barred from the intimate worlds of the men and sometimes men are barred from the intimate world of women (Dewalt and Dewalt 2011). Soyer (2013, cited in Pante 2014) claims that it is difficult for the female researchers to take on the 'apprentice role', unlike the male researchers without facing difficulties such as outright rejection of access, exclusion, and abuse. Female researchers may experience

sexual hassling, being the target of sexist jokes, and being treated as inferior (Gruney 1985; cited in Pante 2014). I also had a gendered research experience stemmed from being a gendered subject.

Being a young woman I was not allowed for participant observation in some places and sometimes my gender becomes a matter of irritation to the men. During a field visit in a former Bangladeshi enclave in the Mathabhanga block, I felt humiliated because of my gender identity. While I was taking an informal interview of a Border guard at the border gate near a former Bangladeshi enclave, some borderland men had objection for it. I had a plan for an informal conversation with the guard and to do a participant observation near the border gate to understand the daily activity of the former resident and the surrounding borderland people. But they had a problem to see a young woman sitting beside him and talking to him. They also had the objection for my staying in that place, particularly near the border gate. While the border guard was cooperative but the men started suggesting me not to stay there. In spite of their suggestion, I had continued the conversation and it resulted in a humiliating situation as he shouted- *why don't you leave the place? you are wasting his time. You are a woman! don't sit beside him, the people can take it in a wrong way.* (when he saw, I was delaying to leave the place, he said angrily) *Don't you understand Bengali? I am telling you to leave the place. Go and sit on the other side. Why don't you leave the place?* (Fieldnote, Cocoabari enclave, January 2018).

I and the guard both of us were shocked by his behaviour and I had to leave the place. I decided not to go to that place again as I did not have the independence for a participant observation in my own way. Gurney (1985; cited in Pante 2014) mentioned such a kind of experience that she was barred some kind of meeting of

male prosecutors and investigators and it limited her chances of observing and participating certain activities. This incidence depicts that the women researchers are often not allowed for participant observation and for a conversation of own their choice. I know that the borderland areas, especially the fenced areas are restricted in a particular time (after evening) for the movement of ordinary people. But it gave me the experience of a gendered encounter of that place. While his command to leave the place makes a sense that a woman is not allowed for a conversation with the male BSF on one hand, his shouting upon me shows his masculine nature to decide that not every place is accessible for the women even in the daylight.

### **5.2.2 Marital Status:**

The marital status of the ethnographer and especially female ethnographers has been discussed in different studies by the ethnographer. Marital status, more specifically the single status of women, has an impact on fieldwork. Sexual status has also been the subject of scrutiny. Many times the virginity of the field worker's self has been the subject of curiosity and concerns (Coffey 1999). My marital status also affected my mood of doing fieldwork and led me to think strategically to conceal the true status. During ethnography in West Bakhairchora former enclave, I had to face some uncomfortable situation regarding my marital status. I found increased attention from the male dwellers of the enclaves. The men, especially those who are unmarried, married but separated, widower became more interested to talk to me. I tried to avoid those men as I got to know that an unmarried man was interested in marrying me. Few women used to joke seeing me as single and used to ask other unmarried men if they want to marry me or not.

Sometimes I was suggested to visit the neighbouring village to meet the unmarried guy for marriage. Dua (1979; cited in Coffey, 1999) has also mentioned that being a female unmarried anthropologist she received many marriage proposals and sexual advances. However, my marital status had sometimes created a negative impression of me. For instance; during ethnography I used to walk on the narrow paths inside the enclave to see the intimate details of the works in the enclave. I used the same path to reach remote areas. I used to stop walking to see the women, busy in different activities and I used to watch the women doing their activity. I found an old lady was uncomfortable seeing me look at her and she talked with me rudely. The next day, I was accompanied by a woman of an enclave, I met her again at the same place and I thought I have become familiar to her now.

But she again talked me rudely to hear about my marital status. When I said that I am unmarried she sarcastically said-“ *Are you looking for a guy to marry her?*” I explained that I am working here but she was not convinced about it, she further said [rudely]-“*If you are working then why are you roaming alone? I don't think you are working here. You are just looking at the people. Are you trying to find a guy? Do you want to marry?*” (Fieldnote, West Bakhalirchora enclave, November 2018). Her comments made me uncomfortable; I left the place and never tried to talk with her and her neighbouring household. My status of being a single and unmarried young woman created a false impression about me and my work. It created a sense of irritation in me and made the situation uncomfortable for an in-depth conversation.

### **5.2.3 Religious Identity:**

My religious identity of being a Hindu researcher sometimes made it easy to enter into the intimate world of the Hindu people and as well as sometimes difficult to

know the hidden details of the life of Muslim people. Being a Hindu I was easily welcomed in the Hindu household but it was almost impossible for me to live with a Muslim family. Shewly (2012) has also shared a similar kind of experience where her Muslim identity obstructed her entry into a Hindu upper caste family.

The enclave where I lived was big in size and the Muslim *para* was away from the Hindu *para*. Hence I wanted to stay with a Muslim family to know them better but when I proposed for it, the Hindu residents had a big objection with it. The Hindus did not have objection for my stay but had a serious objection in taking food from a Muslim family. Understanding the situation I did not stress much on my wish to live with the Muslim family. But, such a situation jeopardised my position as an independent researcher and my ability to take my own decision. Being a researcher I thought to take a neutral position and should consider the experience of the Muslim women equally but I just forgot that my religious identity could be a barrier for such action.

Lamb (2000) has mentioned that touching a Muslim often makes the upper caste Hindu Women as impure and here I realised that eating with them can make me impure in the eyes of the Hindus. Such a mentality of the Hindu enclave dweller and the other surrounding Hindu residents made me in such a position that I could not decide to live in a Muslim family. My plan was to live with a Muslim family that could help me to know them better but it was not possible because of the social circumstances. My living only in the Hindu *para* restricted my participant observation in the Muslim *para* for a limited period.

Because of my Hindu identity, I had to experience another major problem. As I am a Hindu, Muslim men were suspicious about my professional identity and my work.

They were highly suspicious about me and often misstood me as an NRC agent.<sup>20</sup> They were so suspicious about me that even a lengthy interview had made them anxious. The doubt became stronger as I have also developed a connection with the local Panchayat Pradhan [apparently the Pradhan is also a Hindu]. They thought that I might be a secret agent and I may reveal some secrets to the state and their citizenship [Muslim citizenship] might be jeopardised. Not only the men but the Muslim females were also sometimes cynical about me to talk about their inner feelings. Sometimes few females restricted the other females from raising their voice to me when they realized that I might be harmful to them. I realised that the Muslim inhabitants are very worried about the NRC.

At present NRC has created a sense of fear among millions of Indians. Newspaper reports reveals that NRC has caused a threat of deportation among the people, especially among the Muslim inhabitants of India. The enclaves are exchanged and it has become Indian lands thus, the Bangladeshi enclave dwellers are now legal Indians but India still has not provided them with any valid land registration paper which can justify their land right. In such circumstances, they are worried that if India treats them as an illegal Bangladeshi citizen and evict them. Besides these, the people just got their citizenship after 66 years of statelessness condition. Now they fear of repeated statelessness and exclusion.

I know that they have a long journey of socio-political struggles just to live an ordinary citizen's life but their perception about me as an NRC agent had a huge impact on my work. Such experience not only restricted my ingress into a Muslim family but made me conscious to interview them.

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<sup>20</sup> National Register of Citizenship or NRC is carried out with an aim to control illegal migration from Bangladesh. In NRC, It was mentioned that the Bangladeshi migrants who arrived in India after 1971 will be treated as illegal migrants and therefore may be subjected to deportation.

#### **5.2.4 Personality:**

The other thing that I negotiated during fieldwork, was with my personality. Moser (2008) has argued that personality is one type of positionality that affects the research process and outcomes. She argued that researchers often are engaged in fieldwork that is incompatible to their personalities and their personal- emotional and mental abilities can influence the research process. During fieldwork, I often felt that my personality could be a barrier to doing my fieldwork. I am a person who is a less-talkative, un-communicative, and introvert. Due to such personality, I had faced difficulties to a great extent. Overall I can say that I had literally struggled with my personality which was very uncomfortable for me. As compared to me, I found my friend's personality was a better tool for doing research in a village setting. I saw my friend being native of the place, being a jolly and talkative person, she was interacting well and the enclave residents are very comfortable with her. However, when I was alone researcher I had to overcome my personality barrier by being more communicative in nature and I did it gradually.

Apart from this, I was often perceived as a journalist, and such perception often impedes my work in the field. During fieldwork I was not perceived by my original identity rather the identity of a journalist, state officials such as Block Development Officer etc was prevalent in the perception of them. Such identity has several impacts on me-as a researcher and on the research outcome. For instance, during a visit to the Dinhata camp, I had an unexpected occurrence because of their perception about me that could not allow me to conduct further interviews.

After completing an interview of a Hindu woman in the camp I was about to leave the place. The moment I thought to leave the place, one woman started questioning me

about my work. I told them about my work and my identity but they were not convinced. They became frustrated after perceiving me as a journalist. They said- "*many people come here, but we don't get anything. What will I get if I talk to you? What can you do for us?*" I became quite uncomfortable with the sudden change in the reaction. When I replied that I wanted to write about them, one of them replied- "*We don't want it. Many journalists have come here but our problems remain the same. What is about our property? When it will be resolved?*" "*Many have written our stories. But we don't get anything*". I was unprepared for such questions as well as was unable to answer their questions.

I suggested them to tell about the problems to the local administrative officers as being a researcher I am unable to take any fruitful action for them. But they were dissatisfied by this; and one of them said (*showing her frustration*) - "*Then what are you doing here? Why do you come here if you can't solve our problems.*" (*after a pause, showing her dissatisfaction*) "*Don't come here, if you can't help us*" (Fieldnote, Dinhata settlement camp, August 2018). I felt mentally exhausted by the unexpected behaviour I got from the women. I realised that the enclave residents have struggled a lot for the enclave exchange. It is pathetic to see that people still could not get the desired life. I wanted to listen to their experience but they were so frustrated to live in the settlement camps that they don't even want to share their experience. Their attitude towards me made the situation uncomfortable to conduct further interviews at the camp and I did not go there again.

The above discussion highlights that every aspect of the researcher's positionality has an impact on the research process. Sometimes my identity helped to gain access and sometimes impede the research process. The discussion reveals that a distrustful



relationship can hamper the research process immensely. However, I tried to be friendly with them and I had established emotional bonds with the people. During the sudden visit to the former enclaves, it was not possible to build a rapport easily. During my ethnography in the enclaves, I build a good relationship with the people. I tried to be friendly and generous with the enclave dwellers which helped to minimise the gap between researchers and researched.

I have not only tried to behave generously, but I also tried to make my appearance suitable for living in a village setting. For example, during my ethnography in the enclaves I wore only ethnic suits as I know that villagers mostly like ethnic suits. Once I found one woman to state another that-‘She knows what to wear in the villages’ (Fieldnote, Nolgram enclave, December, 2018). During fieldwork, I was sometimes offered food, betel nuts etc by the women, and I accepted it which helped to build a good relationship. They liked my behaviour, appearance, attitude towards them etc and I gradually gained their trust. Even the Muslims who were very suspicious about me, they gradually trusted me but it took time. During my ethnography in Nolgram enclave, few Muslim female enclave dwellers offered me to live with them. Sometimes the Muslim females had become too emotional to bid me goodbye and said – “[*maya dhoraye diya ekhon choila jacchen*] after making us fond of you, now you are leaving us! (Fieldnote, Nolgram enclave, December 2018)”

### **5.3 Negotiating Dangers and Fear in Fieldwork:**

The role of this theme is to prepare a framework for understanding the unexpected experience and dangers which I negotiated during my fieldwork. My research identifies two key areas of danger i.e physical and emotional. Here I have also

discussed my fear of gendered violence which I have negotiated during the research process.

### **5.3.1 Dangers in the Field:**

Qualitative research is often associated with certain kinds of dangers and it may be because "social science researchers are oddly placed within risk society" (Treweek and Linkogle 2000; p.9). Research shows that qualitative works involve some levels of danger and sometimes this is an inevitable experience during the field work (Treweek & Linkogle 2000; Woon 2013; Ghosh 2018; Punch 2012; Jamieson 2000). There is a growing reorganisation that qualitative research can cause a potential emotional upheaval (Treweek & Linkogle 2000) and it can lead to researcher burnout (Swift et al 2008). These risk and threats have traditionally been an obstacle to the research endeavour rather than the part which is being researched (Ghosh 2018). Research work can be emotionally draining and it is important to consider those physical and emotional risks during the research process (Swift et al 2008). My research is a qualitative one, I often experienced dangers during the fieldwork which not only had an impact on the research outcome but also traumatised my emotional endeavour to carry out further fieldwork in that particular research site.

Research shows that the notion of risk and dangers varies according to the political stability of the space, geographic location, actors involved, the topic of research and social and cultural context in which the research is carried out. In a similar vein, it can be said that my experience of dangers in the field is an example of the aforesaid argument.

One day during my fieldwork in Batrigach former Bangladesh enclave I was misinterpreted as a trafficker. After completing my fieldwork on that day I was leaving the enclave. But some people were willing to talk to me. I stopped my toto [the vehicle which I used to reach the enclave] and I had started an informal conversation with the people of the enclave. I was sitting inside the toto, surrounded by the enclave residents and listening to their problems. The conversation was going well but after some time the situation became scary when an old woman came angrily with a stick. She stood beside me. She started talking to me very aggressively [showing her rage and frustration]-

*“ What problems are listening to? Are you giving us a solution? You are just doing a drama, a drama here and nothing else. You are a human trafficker”* [some people laughed at her reaction]. She added- *“ you are laughing at me [looking at those were laughing]! Do you know about her? She is a trafficker. I have seen her roam here and there. She went to the side of the river. If she is not a trafficker then why she is roaming around? Why she is talking to us!”* (Fieldnote, Batrigach enclave, August 2018).

I was deeply shocked at such an allegation! I came to know that there are few cases of trafficking has emerged in the enclave (see chapter 4, section 4.5). When I asked who was trafficked, the old lady again shouted -

*“A woman. Yesterday night a woman was trafficked at night. She was a married woman, a married woman,. Married or unmarried, no one is safe. That's why I am telling you, if someone comes here with such intentions, we will kill them. We will kill them first, then we will think about it. We don't care about anything. In the enclave, the stick is our weapon. Our sticks speak more than our words.”*

I never expected this kind of reaction. I was not ready for such a horrific experience. I was feeling scared at that time. Some other people started doubting me after she characterised me a trafficker. They become doubtful. Some people were clicking my

pictures and asking for my phone number. I was baffled to think about anything. My Toto driver Anwar, whom I met the day before in the Dinhata settlement camp, was worried about the situation and he suggested me to leave the place. I also wanted to leave the place but I could not as they would become more doubtful to me. Later, I brought the situation under my control and left the place. When I shared my horrific experience with other women, they told me that my appearance may have an impact in their perception about me [I was wearing a full black kurta; the colour which is often used to symbolise villains in movies or other media]. The lady may have an image of a human trafficker in her mind by which she characterised me a trafficker or a criminal.

However, I was able to escape the place but was deeply shocked by this. I was well received by them during the earlier interview, but it was strange to have such an odd experience within a few meters of distance. Such experience was physically and psychologically traumatic for both of us, me and the toto driver. The Toto driver was anxious because he was also an enclave dweller and aware of the fact that enclave dwellers do not care about laws and they also can harm us because the enclaves were lawless for around 7 decades. It clearly shows that research can be emotionally draining for the researchers which can severely impact the research process. Punch (2012) has urged to reflect on the hidden struggles that a researcher might negotiate in their research for the production of knowledge.

Moser (2008) has urged to investigate the emotional aspects of fieldwork because this can affect the fieldwork and the production of knowledge from research as well. Woon (2013) emphasise that emotions are closely intertwined in the fieldwork process and can help to appreciate the unpredictable nature of generating research and

its outcome. She experienced different emotional connections and engagements with her respondents which allow a reappraisal of the issues like danger, and ethics. Calgaro (2015) describes her emotional experiences when she interviewed the people of the disaster-affected place. The tragic stories of the disaster-affected people led her towards emotional complexities and she even got the symptoms of STS and VT (ibid).

Sensitive researches not only distress the researchers emotionally but also physically along with the symptoms like headaches, sleep disturbances, gastrointestinal upset, etc. In fact, Calgaro's experience has such an acute blow on her that her entire self was confronted in the field. Drozdowski & Howes (2015) explained how they had experienced a traumatic experience during his research with the people affected by natural disasters. However, my experience of encountering dangers was not so deep to get physiological distress but undoubtedly this could do harm us. It has an emotional impact on me and my research. Realising the sensitivity of the place and after encountering such an incident I could not dare to go there again for data collection. Although I wanted to include the enclave in my research exploration I had to avoid the enclave.

There is another incident which could be scary for me which I experienced on the first day of my fieldwork. I was told by a border guard that I was looking suspicious and I could be shot by the border guard for the suspicion. The particular borderland was extremely sensitive and known for various illegal or criminal activities. In that sense, it was not strange to perceive me as an illegal actor and to shoot me. However, I was saved from any accidents but it made me conscious about the sensitivity of my research.

### **5.3.2 Fear of Violence:**

Geographers have contributed significantly to understand the fear of sexual violence and the spatial perception of women (Valentine 1989; Pain 1991). Although in geographic research women's fear was explored but there are little works about the fear of sexual violence of the female researchers. Researchers own fear of violence may also cause a significant influence on the researcher and the research outcome.

During the fieldwork, I had experienced the fear of gendered violence. To be saved from any kind of gendered violence I had to adopt some strategy. For instance, during my stay with the tribal enclave I never had a bath. The place where I lived, there was no bathroom to take a bath, consequently, the only option I had, was to adopt their bathing style that is bathing in open space. Although the bathroom and the specific open space, both are private property or private space I had a serious fear to be attacked by the male dwellers. For most of the time, both the male and female were found drunk. I had the fear if the drunken man see me bathing alone they could attack me. In case, I got attacked there was very little expectation from others to save me because most of the dwellers used to go to the field for work and few members used to stay in their homes. Again, those who remained, most of them were drunk. This reminds me of Valentine's (1989) findings that women's fear is changed in a temporal context and with the way space is used.

Although I got a big support from them but my fear was exaggerated because of the fact that they were drunk, and I had a predominant imagination about the space as lawless and violent. Besides all these, I do not belong to their community which might create the 'us' and 'other' binary and may cause a negative impact on my protection.

Hence, I adopted an avoidance strategy so as not to provoke any male attention and to be saved from any violence.

#### **5.4 Ethical Dilemmas:**

I have used a recording device and my personal mobile phone for recording audios. I tried to obtain oral consent before recording the interviews. But sometimes I was not allowed to record the conversation. Recording audio was a suspicious thing for many of them. Sometimes they became mute when I asked for their consent to record the interviews. Sometimes it made them aware and they used to start talking about those things which I did not ask but they wanted me to listen. However, in case I was not allowed, I used my notebook.

During my conversation and recording of interviews mostly Hindu women did not have any problem but Muslim women sometimes raised concerns for recording the interviews. The Muslim female became suspicious and startled for recording the conversation. Once I was talking with two Muslim women along with two other Muslim men in a Muslim household and suddenly another Muslim woman came and started talking with us[me and my assistant]. I had a diary and a mobile phone in my hand and I was talking with the women and suddenly the later woman had become startled to see a mobile phone on my hand as she thought I am recording the conversation. The former did not have any concern whether I was recording their voice or not but when the latter saw the mobile, she jumped off the place. However, she said that her husband may not like her voice to be recorded or to be broadcasted anywhere. I assured her that neither will I broadcast it anywhere nor I will reveal her name or identity. But she was worried and narrated one story which she heard from someone else.

*“There was a woman who raised her voice on a particular issue when a journalist asked her opinion. Later her video/audio was broadcasted in media. Her husband has seen it and he was very angry. He asked why she has done such a thing. He said- ‘ I have seen you today on television that you are telling something on media. Who told you to raise your voice?’ She replied that she did not know that her voice was recorded or would be broadcasted. Later, her husband divorced her<sup>21</sup>. ”-*

(Fieldnote, Nolgram enclave, December 2018)

I was shocked to listen to her and assured her that I will not do any such things but she became so worried that she immediately left the place. This makes the situation uncomfortable. It makes me realise the sensitivities of this research and ethical issues in the research process. I had to think twice as to how to conduct fieldwork if such circumstances arrive.

## **5.5 Research Challenges:**

Fieldwork often poses significant challenges in the research process. It is the researcher's own ability to overcome those challenges and fulfil the research process. Here I will discuss the different challenges that I had to experience, and these range from a gendered experience in fieldwork to the dominant discourses on enclaves like geopolitical space.

Traditional works on enclaves have mostly focused on the state-centric nature of enclaves. Several researchers, such as western scholars and South Asian scholars have worked on enclaves. Besides, stories of enclaves are also portrayed in various newspapers, novels, etc. But the way these are portrayed is masculine and state-centric. Even the people are habituated to answer the state-centric questions, and those

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<sup>21</sup> The lady is talking about Tin-Talaq, also known as talaq-e-biddat which is used by Muslims in India. It allows any Muslim man to divorce his wife by stating ‘talaq’ in oral or other forms.



responses were masculintic. As the study deals with the experience of women, I wanted to focus more on interviewing women, but it was the dominating nature of the men that often impede my work. Researching on women in a field where the dominant discourse was statelessness, citizenship, often challenged me to decolonize it.

I tried to talk to the women but sometimes got refused by the male persons during the fieldwork. A man in a former Bangladeshi enclave asked me not to talk with the women as he thinks that the men know everything better. He said--"*why you are asking the women? Women cannot tell you anything. They don't know. We know everything better than them. After all, we have to go to public places. We have to face the problems*" (Fieldnote, Batrigach enclave, August 2018). Several times I had to face a hurdle to talk to the women as their dominating nature and imaginative superiority used to impede my work. Shewly (2012) has also mentioned that the women of the enclaves are powerless and they are never allowed to take decisions of their own for which she had to struggle a lot in interviewing the women.

Another challenge I faced during my field visit was the false perception of the enclave people about me. The Muslim people often perceived me as an NRC agent. I had to ask questions about the place of birth, migration to the people during the interview. But such questioning posed a difficulty for an in-depth interviewing as well as for the informal conversation. This false perception of my identity often did not allow me to interview the women. Even the men used to become doubtful about me while seeing the women to talk to me. They did not want the women to talk to me for an in-depth understanding. They thought that I am a secret agent of NRC and I will reveal the secrets from the women and put them in danger. Unfortunately, the doubt was so

stronger in their minds that I could not erase the doubts completely. Consequently, I had to face problems in the whole data collection process.

Apart from the challenges in the field, I also had to face problems to collect secondary data. The research mostly relies on primary data but I have tried to collect secondary data from various administrative offices. I have met the Sub-Divisional officer in Coochbihar and collected some data from the office. But I could not access sufficient data as the issue of the enclave has always remained a sensitive matter. Officials were not interested to share the socio-cultural data although I requested them many times. I wanted to access the data of the previous survey which was conducted by India in 2011 but I did not get it. They even did not want to share the religious data of the former Bangladeshi enclaves. Schendel (2013) has also expressed his concern about the inaccessibility of data in the borderland studies. He states that the restriction of the state officials made it very difficult for a social scientist to collect data. In fact, he thinks that the inaccessibility of data because of this kind of attitude of state officials is one of the reasons for the slow development in borderland studies in South Asia (ibid). I can relate to Schendel for the unavailability of secondary data in my work. In such a case I had to fully depend on my ethnographic fieldwork.

## **5.6 Limitation of Fieldwork:**

The study is based on the fieldwork on the Indian side of the border. Fieldwork is carried only in the former Bangladeshi enclaves and in the settlement camps in India. Therefore, the study lacks information about those who did not come from the former Indian enclaves. Although I tried to capture the life experiences of Indian enclave residents by visiting the settlement camps and by interviewing them, it reveals a partial view of life in the former Indian enclaves. The residents of these camps left

their enclaves for a variety of reasons; therefore their portrayal of enclave life reflects a partial view of life in the enclaves. Again, due to my positionality and various political issues, I often could not take in-depth interviews of the Muslim enclave dweller. Therefore in some aspects, I could not provide narratives of the Muslim dwellers.

### **5.7 Conclusion:**

Looking at the emerging issues during the fieldwork, it can be said that not only the researcher's positionality but the positioning of the research participants influence in the research outcome. Because of the socio-political circumstances and their religious orientation I was often perceived as a threat to them. They often perceived me as a villain, and I realised that enclave resident's individual and collective life, and the prevailing political situation both have a significant role in their perception. A critical investigation was required but due to limited time it was not possible, rather I had to skip the unfriendly enclaves and the people.

At last, I would like to add that although my ethnographic work was limited for a short period of time, it enabled me to understand the complex reality of enclave life. It helped me to understand enclave-host people relationships, gender relationships in their everyday lives very closely. All my experiences in the field shaped my access to the participants, and hence the research outcome.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Conclusion**

I.1 As understood by a wider examination of literature in border and geography in general and more specifically on the research on enclaves in the India-Bangladesh enclaves reveals the fact that enclaves has remained as an under-researched area in geographical research agenda. However, the last two decades has witnessed a spurt of interests on myriad aspects of enclave. Recent literatures on enclaves indicate that enclaves have gained significant attention from scholars from all over world. But, a critical reflection on the research is enough to point out those state-centric mainstream ideas such as citizenship, boundary, sovereignty have dominated to study on enclaves. Nevertheless, some attempts have been made to examine enclave from the perspective of everyday life of enclave. However, in these studies gender-specific especially issues of women have largely been ignored.

I.2 The study largely conceptualises the major discourses of geography, gender and border in the context of enclave. Whereas inter-relationship of geography has been at the centre stage of Political Geography's it has hardly engaged the gender lens. In fact, studies on border and gender have been a recent trend and has remained at the periphery of Political Geography. In this context, the study of enclave has reproduced the similar state-centric biases of Political Geography that tries to deal with 'big politics' such Geopolitics. Therefore, the understanding of enclaves is mostly dominated by border/boundary disputes, issues of citizenship which could hardly rise above the nation-state containers. So, the understanding of the borderlands like enclaves could hardly incorporate 'micro-politics' in academic scholarships. What is understood in this study that this had far-reaching impact in terms of talking about issues that touches the most common lives of residents of enclaves. As borderlands have been hardened by 'big

politics' it has been relatively difficult to examine aspects like structures of everyday life that holds the mirror to border-making/un-making dynamics in the enclaves. Within as understood from the study the understanding of 'enclave' needs look beyond examining it merely as a physical space rather than a by product of embedded social structures. Here more than physical aspects, human aspects like 'emotion' plays a major role that informs aspects like 'border-crossing' in the everyday life of the residents. As found in the study if one attempts to study 'enclave' from the lens of the women resident, 'emotional geographies' are major site where 'enclaves' acquires new meaning.

II.1 Literatures on enclaves reflect that geo-political complexities and ambiguities remain at the core of enclaves. Enclaves are such a peculiar space in the human world that demonstrates prevalence of ambiguities in defining and theorising enclave. The literatures of world enclaves recognise a paucity of knowledge in understanding enclave and enclave like complex spaces. Discussion on India-Bangladesh enclaves reveals a similar kind of expressions to investigate enclaves as these enclaves comprise the largest groups of enclaves in the world. Being the largest groups of enclave, these shows numerous complexities to demarcate them. Multiple discrepancies are found from various scholarly works and government reports regarding the number of India-Bangladesh enclaves which often makes it difficult to research on enclave. From the present status of these enclaves it can be assumed that there are no enclaves left in the India-Bangladesh enclaves after exchange programme but the discrepancies of numbers of enclaves creates numerous puzzles that normalizes the India-Bangladesh borderlands in the eyes of citizenry and the state.

II.2 The formation of India-Bangladesh enclaves reveals the fact that enclave territories are rooted in colonial history. These are deeply rooted to the history of South-Asian countries and that's why these enclaves have also undergone massive

changes with the changing state formation in the region. Territorial dynamism and its associated borderisation and de-borderisation are inherent to the India-Bangladesh enclaves. However, India-Bangladesh enclaves are not a mere geo-political space devoid of human population, rather, these are home of thousands of ordinary residents who lives inside these places. It is the people who added meaning to the understanding of enclave through their everyday actions. With the changes of events their lives have gone through various phases of transformation. The study reflects that enclave dweller's lives are tied with the major events in South-Asia's history and politics. The enclave dweller's life is closely associated with the formation of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Consequently their life was also transformed by the rhythm of bilateral relation, national politics and major events of the states.

III.1 As the enclaves are small territories and located in a different country, enclave dwellers have discovered themselves to be 'landlocked' within their surrounding country. Territorial complexities on one hand, and lack of access to the parent state made enclave dwellers life very difficult to lead. Deprivation, lack of basic rights was a part of their life for more than six decades. They have been deprived of basic human rights which has made their life extremely vulnerable and fragile. In such a circumstances, they have developed their own tactics to negotiate with the vulnerabilities which are often rendered illegal in the eyes of the state.

III.2 As found from the fieldwork under this study dependency in everyday life of the enclave dwellers on surrounding country and rightlessness have resulted into an unequal power relation between host residents and enclave dwellers where enclave residents are mostly at the receiving end. Such powerlessness, deprivation and everyday sufferings in the enclaves have led constituted the identity mostly known in colloquial Bangla as '*chiter lok*' or 'enclave dwellers'. This has become the ultimate distinctive markers between the

enclave residents and the mainland residents. Such markers and their identification has constructed a psychological border between enclave and host residents which reveals that border does not necessarily mean a geographical border-on-the-ground, rather border are constructed socially that occupies the minds of people as the peculiar geography of the enclave itself becomes stigmatized in the identity of '*chiter lok*'.

IV.1 The study found that enclaves are a geographical space where violence of various forms and nature informs the everyday life of dwellers. Such violence has transformed the enclaves as spaces of fear making it as very unstable. Women and their lives are found to be affected differently by such violence where they find themselves at the receiving ends which has made them more vulnerable. Being women, they are part of the gender exploitation in the public and private spaces. More importantly, such gendered inequalities are further violently reproduced by the violent nature of 'enclaves' which has doubled the vulnerabilities of women in the enclaves who are subjected to exploitation. Women are left with no choice but to adapt and navigate such vulnerabilities in order to carry out the everyday requirements of their lives. So, as a woman they are subjected to violence. More so, as a resident of the masculine space like the 'enclaves' their vulnerabilities gets further entrenched.

IV.2 The study reveals that women as gendered subject and part of the patriarchal societal structure negotiate enclave in such a way which is inherently linked with gendered positioning and multiplicity of the border. The study found that women's position in the life course, religion, ethnicity all functions in defining their status and their everyday life. It shows that women encounter different forms of border throughout out their life. Whereas unmarried women face borders at the time of marriage, married women experiences borders after getting married in an enclave.

The border they experience is the result of mutual actions of bordering, gender ideology and patriarchal structure in the enclaves.

V.1 The study reveals that the importance of ethnography in examining enclave. Conducting fieldwork in enclave comes with multiple challenges which sometime were impossible to overcome. The challenges in fieldwork reflect the importance of researcher's positionality in research process. Researcher's positionality can form a distrustful relationship between the researchers and researched which hamper the research outcome immensely. It is also found that research in sensitive areas can bring multiple troubles into the researcher's life which not only impose challenge for research, but also can hamper the researcher's life.

A broad understanding developed from the study is that enclaves are the places which shows a conjunction of multiple geographic reality. Enclaves are spaces which are overlapped with each other's territory. Such an overlapping arrangement of the space has developed into the formation of complex multiple layers of identity formation. The enclaves dwellers have experienced multiple phases of transformation where they have got multiple identities for being a dweller of enclave. Within the time period of around seven decades, the Bangladeshi enclave dwellers have become Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Indians, and enclave resident. However, among all the identities what dominates is their identity of chit or enclave resident.

The enclave is like a microcosm where people experience multiplicities of border and its associated negotiations. Multiplicity of bordering is an important facet of lives where they not only face political border, rather several other borders emerging out of the structures of everyday lives. Such borders are very fluid and can be constructed at any time period. This fluid borders are very active in the social life of people and it is the emotional experience by which the border is constructed. It is the labelling of



'chit' or enclave in their minds which creates such a differentiation and bordering. Such differentiation plays an important in enclave dwellers life as it creates a micro politics between host and enclave residents where everyone try to dominate each other.

As understood, lives of the women in the enclaves are structured according to the rhythm of bordering, patriarchy and politics around the nation-state. Micro geographies of enclaves' shows that everyday life is not varied only because of rightlessness and absence of state machineries, life experience varied depending on the gender of the residents. The difference in life is greatly influenced by the intersection of gender. Because of gender identity there is an unequal power relationship between the male and females of enclave. Gender ideologies, patriarchy and geography together function in the lives of women which reveal that women have different stories to speak about enclave. Their narratives reflect that they experience greater extent of borders and barriers. Geographical border and patriarchal barrier both acted as a border in their life. However, although the effect of border and patriarchy is very influential in women's life but they also have an agency to evade the barriers and baggage in their life. In this way, women's life experience shows an interplay of domination and subversion, borderisation and negotiation by which their life in the enclaves are structured.

The study examines the multiplicities of life of enclave dwellers that reflects multiple and complex realities of encalve lifes. Focusing not only on routine activities of life, rather, the grand ones too, the study goes further to understand the emotional dimensions of enclave residents which had mostly been ignored in academic scholarship on enclaves. Understanding developed from the field points out that human emotions play an important part in the everyday reproductions of the enclaves

and concurrent process of border and borderization of identities. What is understood is that borders drawn on maps may play some roles in the lives of people and have bearings on their lives. But it is the interaction of ‘geography’ and ‘emotion’ that ultimately socially constructs and reproduces ideas of boundaries between people of various sorts—those who are ‘wanted’ or ‘unwanted’ by the nation-state. This is the site where all the binaries between foreigner/citizen, legal/illegal, good/bad, people are reproduced in everyday life.

In a nutshell, enclaves can not be straightjacketed into a matter of boundary-dispute or geopolitical puzzle for the nation-state. Rather, it reflects mirror of image of the complex and overlapping colonial histories. Such complexities has got further entrenched with the postcolonial politics of management of border and migration around the enclaves on the India-Bangladesh border. Undoubtedly, the nation-state as the most important political frame that ultimately configures power relations in making of the enclaves. And because of this it is very obvious that majority of studies on enclaves on India-Bangladesh border centres around the ‘big politics’ from above. However, as understood from the study a re-examination of the same category of enclave from common lives tells a fascinating story about how enclaves and its associated boundaries are discursively reproduced through everyday interactions of dwellers and residents.

The micro-politics of enclaves in the everyday life produces the ‘border effect’ in the myriad moments of borderization/deborderization. It is these moments that *actually and in reality aggregates/disaggregates border in the enclaves*. Such moments are articulated through the reproduction, assertion and re-assertions of binaries such as enclave/mainland, citizen/foreigner etc. that makes ambivalent, overlapping and the so-called confusing micro-geographies of the enclaves meaningful. Enclaves in the

borderlands of India and Bangladesh gets constructed as spaces of danger, anger and hatred with the fences of death and the metaphorical boundaries, and it gets further securitized through investments in the political rhetorics of legal/illegal migrants. The heirarchizing and stratifying capacity of the borders differently positions the enclaves that ultimately makes huge impact on the lives of dwellers especially in accessing essential services crucial for supporting and sustaining minimum standards of living.

Looking from the lens of everyday struggles of women, enclaves appears as more exclusionary that almost cripples their lives. As understood from the study, the violent moments of borderisation gets superimposed on the already masculinised spaces produced by the enclaves. In a hyper visible space, women's mobility gets curtailed and her body is subjected to the microscopic gaze. Enclaves are almost appears to be etched on their bodies leading to moments where women's bodies functions as de facto borders of the enclaves—here as the territorial edge between the enclave and the host country's residential territories. Most importantly, social institutions like marriage plays an instrumental role in further entrenching these edges. Marriage related migration pushes them to vulnerabilities like the impending likelihood of various degrees of illegalization based on the exploitation of difference between the so-called 'legal' and 'illegal'. As found in the study, women's bodies become a bait or a mediating object between the enclave families and the host countries families who try to get advantage out of the marriage. Here, the usual patriarchal rules get more amplified and overt in order to evade the territorial complexities of enclave lives. Through such control of women bodies, *the inanimated lines on-the-map that marks the borderlands of India and Bangladesh gets transformed in the form of an enchanted lines—a line that not only demarcates the domestic space and the outside world but also the enclave and the host country's territories.*

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**Annexure 2.1**

**Bangladeshi enclaves in India as per Shib-shankar Chatterjee**

Sl no	Name of the enclaves	Area (Approximately In Acre)	Sl no	Name of the enclave	Area (Approximately In Acre)	Sl no	Name of the enclave	Area (Approximately In Acre)	Sl no	Name of the enclave	Area(Approximately In Acre)
1	Teldhar	14.48	25	Chhit land of Panbari number-02	1.13	49	Mahishmari	122.77	73	Dkhhin mashaldanga	
2	Teldhar		26	Chhit panbari	108.59	50	Baro saradubi	34.96	74	Dkhhin mashaldanga	
3	Baikunthapur Teldhar		27	Dahagram	3877.05	51	Falnapur	506.56	75	Dkhhin mashaldanga	571.38
4	Baikunthapur Teldhar	52	28	Angarpota	739.80	52	Nolgram		76	Dkhhin mashaldanga	
5	Baikunthapur Teldhar		29	Dhabolshuti Mirgipur	173.80	53	Nolgram	1397.34	77	Dkhhin mashaldanga	
6	Nazirganj-30	1.13	30	Bamandal	2.19	54	Nolgram		78	Dkhhin mashaldanga	
7	Nazirganj-29	6.54	31	Chhit dhabolshuti	66.58	55	Chhit nolgram	49.50	79	Paschim mashaldanga	29.49
8	Nazirganj		32	Dhabolshuti	60.45	56	Chhit nolgram		80	Paschim mashaldanga	
9	Nazirganj	21.28	33	Dhabolshuti	1.60	57	Amjhol	1.25	81	Kachua	119.74
10	Nazirganj		34	Srirampur	1.05	58	Kismat batrigachh	209.95	82	Madhyo chhit Mashaldanga	11.87
11	Debottar sholganga	6.10	35	Jote nijjama	87.45	59	Batrigachh	577.37	83	I-purbo chhit Mashaldanga	35.01
12	Upan chowki bhajni, 111	169.37	36	Chhit land of Jagatber number-03	69.84	60	Batrigachh		84	Ii-purbo chhit Mashaldanga	
13	Upan chowki bhajni, 99	1.75	37	Chhit land of jagatber number-01	30.66	61	Durgapur	20.96	85	Pashchim chhit Mashaldanga	7.60
14	Upan chowki bhajni, 24	0.71	38	Chhit land of Jagatber number-02	27.09	62	Bansua khamar gitaldaha	24.54	86	Purbo mashaldanga	153.89
15	Upan chowki bhajni, 13	1.34	39	Chhit kokoabari	29.49	63	Karala		87	Purbo mashaldanga	
16	Upan chowki bhajni, 112	14.11	40	Chhit bhandardaha	39.96	64	Karala	269.91	88	Uttor mashaldanga	27.29
17	Upan chowki bhajni, 113	38.68	41	Jongra	8.25	65	Karala		89	Madhyo Mashaldanga	136.66
18	Upan chowki bhajni, 15	1.02	42	Dhabolguri	12.50	66	Chandrakhan	34.68	90	Dakhhin Mashaldanga	Area include in S. L. Number 73 to 78
19	Upan chowki bhajni, 110	110.97	43	Chhit dhabolguri	22.31	67	Shibaprosad mustafi	373.20	91	Uttor bansjani	47.17
20	Upan chowki bhajni, 22	72.20	44	Chhit land of Dhabolguri number-03	1.33	68	Shibaprosad mustafi		92	Uttor dhaldanga	
21	Debi doba	7.46	45	Chhit land of Dhabolguri number-04	4.55	69	Poaturkuthi	589.94	93	Uttor dhaldanga	23.86
22	Chhit kuchlibari	370.64	46	Chhit land of Dhabolguri number-05	4.12	70	Paschim bakalir chhara	151.98	94	Uttor dhaldanga	
23	Chhit land of Kuchlibari	1.83	47	Chhit land of Dhabolguri number-01	26.83	71	Madhyo bakalir chhara	32.72	95	Chhat tilai	81.56
24	Bala pukhuri	331.64	48	Chhit land of Dhabolguri number-02	13.95	72	Purbo bakalir chhara	12.23			

(Source: Chatterjee 2011)

**Annexure 2.2**

**Indian Enclaves in Bangladesh as per Shib-shankar Chatterjee**

Sl no	Name of the enclaves	Area(Approximately in Acre)	Sl no	Name of the enclave	Area(Approximately in Acre)	Sl no	Name of the enclave	Area (Approximately in Acre)	Sl no.	Name of the enclave	Area(Approximately in Acre)
1	Dahala khagrabari	02650.35	32	Panishala	51.43	63	Nazirganj	3.89	94	Banshkata	2.55
2	Dahala khagrabari	N.A	33	Latamari	98.85	64	Nazirganj	73.27	95	Banshkata	30.98
3	Dahala khagrabari	N.A	34	Dwarikamari	39.52	65	Nazirganj	49.05	96	Banshkata	413.81
4	Dahala khagrabari	N.A	35	Chhat bhothat	56.11	66	Nazirganj	5.05	97	Banshkata	30.75
5	Dahala khagrabari	N.A	36	Dwarikamari	45.73	67	Nazirganj	0.77	98	Banshkata	33.22
6	Kote bhajni	2012.27	37	Kuchlibari	05.78	68	Nazirganj	1.04	99	Banshkata	24.37
7	Kote bhajni	N.A	38	Kuchlibari	2.04	69	Nazirganj	1.02	100	Banshkata	0.28
8	Kote bhajni	N.A	39	Baro kuchlibari	4.35	70	Nazirganj	3.87	101	Banshkata	0.64
9	Kote bhajni	N.A	40	Balapukhuri	5.24	71	Nazirganj	12.18	102	Banshkata	1.39
10	Balaporkhagrabari	1752.44	41	Upen chouki kuchlibari	0.32	72	Nazirganj	54.04	103	Banshkata	2.72
11	Baro khangir	50.51	42	Baro khangir	30.53	73	Nazirganj	8.27	104	Banshkata	2.33
12	Balapukhuri	55.91	43	Kharija gital daha	36.83	74	Nazirganj	14.22	105	Banshkata	1.37
13	Balapukhuri	05.24	44	Kharija gital daha	7.71	75	Putimari	122.80	106	Banshkata	21.07
14	Upen chouki kuchlibari	44.04	45	Nagarjika bari	33.41	76	Nazirganj	0.52	107	Banshkata	22.35
15	Bhotbari	36.83	46	Nataktaka	162.26	77	Binnaguri	763.30	108	Banshkata	11.96
16	Baro khangir	87.42	47	Nataktaka	0.26	78	Sakati	197.24	109	Bhogramari	1.44
17	Chhoto bagdokra	41.70	48	Beuladanga		79	Sakati	1012.38	110	Chhenakata	7.81
18	Ratanpur	58.91	49	Beuladanga	862.46	80	Sakati	95.23	111	Gotamari chhit	126.59
19	Bagdokra	25.49	50	Beuladanga chhat	0.83	81	Singimari (part-i)	6.07	112	Gotamari chhit	20.02
20	Kharkharia	51.62	51	Beuladanga	860.43	82	Garati	58.23	113	Nolgram chhit	4.73
21	Latamari	110.92	52	Kajol dighi	771.44	83	Garati	0.79	114	Kalamati	21.21
22	Kharkharia	60.74	53	Shalbari	1188.93	84	Garati	18.0	115	Seotikursha	45.63
23	Bhotbari	205.46	54	Daikhata chhat	499.21	85	Garati	958.66	116	Baro gaonchulka	39.99
24	Kamat changrabandha	42.83	55	Daikhata	1640.11	86	Garati	1.74	117	Dighaltari i	12.31
25	Kamat changrabandha	16.01	56	Daikhata	34.19	87	Garati	73.75	118	Dighaltari ii	8.89
26	Panishala	137.66	57	Nazirganj	58.32	88	Binnaguri	11.50	119	Gaon chulka i	8.92
27	Dwarikamarikhasbash	36.50	58	Nazirganj	434.29	89	Banshkata	315.04	120	Gaon chulka ii	0.90
28	Panishala	0.27	59	Daikhata i	2.63	90	Banshkata	57.86	121	Chotoguraljhora	35.74
29	Panishala	18.01	60	Nazirganj	53.47	91	Banshkata	0.77	122	Dashiar chhara	1643.44
30	Panishala	64.63	61	Nazirganj chhit	1.07	92	Banshkata	29.20	123	Bansh bhhitakuchi pachai	81.71
31	Latamari	283.53	62	Nazirganj	17.95	93	Banshkata	16.96	124	Sahebganj	31.58
125	Chhit seuruguru	2.54	126	Chhit seuruguru	35.53	127	Dakur hat dakinirkuthhi	14.27	128	Banspachai	217.29
129	Chhoto gural jhora ii	17.85	130	Boro Kanki	N.A						

(Source: Chatterjee 2011)

**Annexure 2.3**

**Number of Bangladeshi Enclave and Population as per the Indian Government Reports**

Sl no	Name	Area in acres	Population	No of families	Sl no	Name of the enclave	Area in acres	Population	No of families	Sl no	Name of the enclave	Area in acres	Population	No of families
1	Chit kutchlibari	370.64	260	57	18	Chhitland of dhabalguri no. 3	1.33	0	0	35	Pashchim bakalir chhara	151.98	777	194
2	Chhitland of kutchlibari	1.83	0	0	19	Chhitland of dhabalguri no. 4	4.55	0	5	36	Madhya bakalir chhara	32.72	165	41
3	Balapukhari	331.64	274	60	20	Chhitland of dhabalguri no. 5	4.12	0	0	37	Purba bakalir chara	12.23	61	15
4	Chhitland of panbari no.2	1.13	0	0	21	Chhitland of dhabalguri no. 6	22.31	26	6	38	Madhya masaldanga	136.66	457	114
5	Chhit panbari	108.59	13	2	22	Chhitland of dhabalguri no. 1	26.83	0	0	39	Madhya chhit masaldanga	11.87	24	6
6	Dhabalsati mirgipur	173.88	162	38	23	Chhitland of dhabalguri no. 2	19.95	226	48	40	Paschim chhit masaldanga	7.60	30	8
7	Bamandal	2.24	0	0	24	Mahishmari	122.77	594	137	41	Uttar masaldanga	27.29	0	0
8	Chhit dhabalbasti	66.58	0	0	25	Falnapur	506.56	1664	305	42	Kachua	119.74	470	118
9	Dhabalsati	60.45	0	0	26	Nalgram fragment	1397.34	172	36	43	Dakshin masaldanga fragment	571.38	1671	418
10	Srirampur	1.05	0	0	27	Chhit nalgram fragment	49.50	0	0	44	Paschim masaldanga fragment	29.49	143	36
11	Jote nijjama	87.54	156	40	28	Bura baradubi	34.96	0	0	45	Purba chhit masaldanga fragment	35.01	0	0
12	Chhitland of jagatber no.3	69.84	182	39	29	Amjhol	1.25	608	130	46	Purba masaldanga fragment	153.89	342	86
13	Chhitland of jagatber no.1	30.66	33	9	30	Kismat batrigatchi	209.95	0	0	47	Karala fragment	269.91	1228	307
14	Chhitland of jagatber no.2	27.09	33	9	31	Durgapur	20.96	1509	360	48	Sibprasad mustafi fragment	373.20	307	77
15	Chhit kokoabari	29.49	65	16	32	Batrigatchi fragment	577.37	0	0	49	Uttar bansjani	47.17	0	0
16	Chhit bhandardaha	39.96	43	10	33	Bansua khamar citaldaha	24.54	0	0	50	Chhat tilai	81.56	15	5
17	Dhabalguri	12.50	0	0	34	Poaturkuthi	589.94	2511	628	51	Uttar dhaldanga fragment	24.98	0	0

**(Source: Public Diplomacy Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India)**



**Annexure 2.4**

**Number of Indian Enclave and Population as per the Indian Government Reports**

Sl no	Name of enclave	Area in acres	population	No of families	Sl no	Name of enclave	Area in acres	population	No of families	Sl no	Name	Area in acres	population	No of families
1	Garatai	58.23	133	31	38	-Do-	36.83	186	45	76	-Do-	20.48	88	19
2	-Do-	0.79	0	0	39	Barakhangir	30.53	86	21	77	Bhogranguri	1.44	0	0
3	-Do-	18.0	81	19	40	Nagarjikabari	33.41	197	45	78	Banskata	413.81	1402	291
4	-Do-	958.66	1585	345	41	Kuchlibari	5.78	39	10	79	-Do-	30.75	74	18
5	-Do-	1.74	6	1	42	-Do-	2.04	0	0	80	-Do-	12.15	0	0
6	-Do-	73.75	122	27	43	Barakuchlibari fragment	4.35	0	0	81	-Do-	57.86	134	28
7	Singimari part i	6.07	0	0	44	Jamaldaha balapukhari	5.24	7	2	82	-Do-	315.04	664	153
8	Nazirganja	58.32	662	152	45	Uponchowki kuchlibari	0.32	0	0	83	-Do-	0.77	0	0
9	-Do-	434.29	449	108	46	-Do-		127	29	84	-Do-	29.20	33	8
10	-Do-	53.47	0	0	47	Bhotbari	36.83	83	15	85	-Do-	33.22	65	13
11	-Do-	1.07	0	0	48	Balapukhari	55.91	211	52	86	-Do-	12.72	0	0
12	-Do-	17.95	0	0	49	Bara khangir	50.51	128	28	87	-Do-	2.33	0	0
13	-Do-	3.89	0	0	50	-Do-	87.42	322	70	88	-Do-	2.55	0	0
14	-Do-	73.27	0	0	51	Chat bagdokra	41.70	98	21	89	-Do-	30.98	0	0
15	-Do-	49.05	0	0	52	Ratanpur	58.81	89	19	90	-Do-	0.64	0	0
16	-Do-	5.05	0	0	53	Bagdokra	25.49	39	11	91	-Do-	1.39	0	0
17	-Do-	0.77	0	0	54	Fulker dabri fragnment	0.88	0	0	92	-Do-	1.37	0	0
18	-Do-	1.04	0	0	56	Kharkharia	60.74	136	29	93	-Do-	16.96	187	40
19	-Do-	1.02	0	0	57	-Do-	51.62	205	47	94	-Do-	24.37	0	0
20	-Do-	3.87	0	0	58	Lotamari	110.92	434	98	95	-Do-	0.28	0	0
21	-Do-	12.18	0	0	59	Bhotbari	205.46	635	128	96	Asokbari	3.50	0	0
22	-Do-	54.04	0	0	60	Kamat changrabandha	42.80	105	19	97	Gotamari chhit	126.59	488	111
23	-Do-	8.27	0	0	61	-Do-	16.01	46	9	98	-Do-	20.02	34	9
24	-Do-	14.22	0	0	62	Panisala	137.66	330	58	99	Banspachai	217.29	689	142
25	-Do-	0.52	0	0	63	Dwarikamari khasbash	36.50	166	38	100	Banspachai bhitarkuthi	81.71	633	153
26	Putimari	122.80	367	80	64	Panisala	0.27	62	14	101	Dasiar chara	1643.44	7131	134
27	Daikhata chhat	499.21	539	118	65	-Do-	18.01	0	0	102	Dakurhat-dakinirhat	14.27	0	0
28	Salbari	1188.93	1324	289	66	-Do-	64.63	173	37	103	Kalamati	21.21	99	23
29	Kajal dighi	771.44	1576	311	67	-Do-	51.40	118	26	104	Shahebganj	31.58	148	30
30	Natakotha	162.26	118	24	68	Lotamari	283.53	604	118	105	Seotikursa	45.63	228	52
31	-Do-	0.26	77	15	69	Lotamari	98.85	341	69	106	Bara goachulka	39.99	91	24
32	Beuladanga chhat	0.83	0	0	70	Dwarikamari	39.52	127	24	107	Goachulka ii	0.90	9	3
33	Beuladanga	862.46	1837	364	71	-Do-	45.73	190	39	107	Goachulka i	8.92	102	24
34	Balapara khagrabari	1752.44	2868	560	72	Chat bhotbat	56.91	198	43	109	Dighaltari ii	8.81	42	8
35	Kotbhajni	2012.2	3716	686	73	Chenakata	7.81	0	0	110	Dighaltari i	12.31	110	24
36	Dahala khagrabari fragment	2650.3	3431	700	74	Baskata	22.35	125	22	111	Choto garaljhora ii	17.85	147	35
37	Bara khankiharija gitaldaha	7.71	37	8	75	-Do-	11.96	43	10	112	Choto garaljhora 1	35.74	193	39

(Source : Public Diplomacy Division, Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India)