**PERIPHERAL SPACES, CONTESTED BOUNDARIES: CASE OF INDO-BANGLADESH BORDER REGION**

Borders and borderlands have always been highly contestable regions especially for modern nation states and an interesting scholarly exercise for academics and researchers. It is a paradox that though the promise of globalization assures porous and diffused borders with a constant flow of material, non-material and human traffic (both legitimate and illegitimate) criss-crossing national boundaries and become part of what can broadly be called ‘regimes of circulation’ with hybrid cultures, creole religion and kitsch languages. Borders are radical zones and support a large population by providing sustenance and major source of livelihood for people on both sides. Moreover, with the onset of globalization, this traffic of material and non-material artifacts has increased in intensity and has resulted in a rich interaction of the local with the global. These are reciprocal relationship and exchange influences the political systems and legal apparatus along with influencing notions like citizenship, sovereignty, marginality, regionalism and issues of migration policy, insurgency, ethnic mobilization and conflict etc. Such concerns have also resulted in a ‘scopic’ regime and governmentality of fringe population on the borders which may a time leads to violence and bloodshed affecting bilateral ties between nations. Even though national boundaries in popular discourse are perceived to be cartographic markers, yet, history has shown how such lines lead to violence, displacement and affects bilateral ties. Borders and borderlands have divided people, influenced economy and cultures and have a bearing on diplomatic relations and foreign policy.

An important case of borders turning into disputed areas and affecting international relations has been between India and Bangladesh. The Indo-Bangladesh region is a contested space owing first of all to the historicity and conditions under which Bangladesh was born. For almost more than half a century, both the nations have been battling over issues that affect both the nations in economic, political and strategic terms. These include issues of human trafficking, informal trade (food, machinery, textiles, consumer goods, intermediate goods etc besides others like smuggling of cattle (worth around $81,000 every day) and contraband items like arms and narcotics have attained the status of full fledged parallel economy and a lucrative industry for those involved. These issues attain special significance due to the proposed regional economic cooperation called BCIM-Economic Corridor and involve Bangladesh, China, India and Myanmar which will boost the economy and give a fillip to bilateral relations of the nations involved.

My paper tries to address issue of human trafficking on the Indo-Bangladesh border. It will deal with the factors and nodes that contribute to the trafficking infrastructure, insurgency as well as the controversy surrounding ‘enclaves’ or ‘no man’s land.’ These and many more issues will also focus on the question of citizenship and sovereignty of the two nation states.