

Study on Impact of Existence of an Open Boundary Foreign Enclave and a 24-Hours Open Corridor for Foreigners inside Indian Territory

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Abstract : In 2015, historic Land Boundary Agreement (LBA) executed between India and Bangladesh finally settled almost seven decades long overdue critical enclave problems of the two neighbouring countries. Enclaves within India and Bangladesh were the awful outcome of the partition of India in 1947. As a dire consequence, the populace within these enclaves enormously suffered from getting basic rights and opportunities and governmental support services till long 67 years after India's independence and partition. As per LBA, 2015, 51 Bangladeshi (BD) enclaves inside Indian territory and 111 Indian enclaves inside Bangladesh territory were actually transferred to each other. But, by virtue of LBA, 1974 executed earlier between the two countries, one BD enclave situated inside India, namely Dohogram-Angarpota (D-A) twin enclave, had not yet been exchanged by means of LBA, 2015 and it still remains as an integral part, may not be contiguous, of Bangladesh completely surrounded by Indian territory. A study was undertaken through an extensive field survey to assess the impact of the existence of D-A BD enclave inside Indian territory from India's perspective. Field survey was conducted for the purpose in the form of an interview, group discussion, questionnaire survey, personal interaction etc. to gather information from the Indian people residing adjacent to D-A enclave and Tin Bigha Corridor (TBC), people of D-A enclave, officials of Border Security Forces of India and Bangladesh, public representatives, representatives of political organizations etc. The issue of the existence of D-A BD enclave inside Indian territory seriously brought apprehension of future problems to the people of Kuchlibari Region of Mekhligunj Block, India, on its contiguity with Indian mainland due to 24-hour open access for the BD people through TBC. The anxiety of the local Indian people regarding threats to the national security of India as well as to the law and order issues of the locality due to the open border of D-A BD enclave in the region. On the other hand, it was observed that 24 hours opening of TBC brought significant positive changes to the people of D-A BD enclave in terms of their socio-economic condition and security status.

Keywords : enclave, exchange of enclaves, land boundary agreement, Dohogram-Angarpota (D-A) Bangladeshi (BD) enclave, Tin Bigha Corridor

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