**How does Balibar’s notion of the territorial metaphor of inclusion and exclusion help us understand the political and social condition of the stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh? Answer your question using Dina Siddiqi’s article ‘Left Behind by the Nation: ‘Stranded Pakistanis in Bangladesh’ (2013). (Word limit: 1000. Marks: 15)**

The Urdu-speaking Muslim population of Bangladesh, often referred to as "stranded Pakistanis," came to East Pakistan during the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947. They came from parts of India such as Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, and Punjab to what was then East Pakistan (Siddiqi, 2013). The notion of the territorial metaphor of inclusion and exclusion proposed by Étienne Balibar helps clarify the political and social circumstances surrounding the Pakistanis who are stranded in Bangladesh as discussed in Dina Siddiqi's article.

Dina Siddiqi (2013) claims that as a result of the riots in India against the Muslim minority, around 699,000 Muslims fled to East Pakistan during the 1947 partition. These populations eventually transitioned from being victims of communal violence to citizens of the newly established Pakistan and finally to stateless people. They initially seemed reluctant to interact with the locals and seemed unsure of their national affiliation due to linguistic and cultural differences. Bengalis therefore perceived them as a unified community claiming cultural exclusivity and superiority over the rest of the population. In addition, the Pakistani government's bias in favor of some Urdu speakers and its disapproval of integration have collectively shaped the outlook of Bagalis and led to their marginalization.

Balibar (2015) raises questions about the concept of subjects and relationships between subjects about who is excluded and who is responsible for exclusion. He asserts that the community itself is responsible for exclusion. However, this participation often happens through the delegation of power to the state. Moreover, citizens may influence stronger exclusionary measures against immigrants out of social anxiety if they are socially disadvantaged which is one of the key reasons for setting the mindset of exclusion of the standard Pakistanis.

Exclusion has two aspects such as historical and symbolic that are influenced by each other (Balibar, 2015). Their historical background of migration and the symbolic aspect of different linguistics and cultures was one of the key reasons for their exclusion. There can be no institutional procedure for exclusion without a rule whether it be a political, rule of law, or a practical sociological norm. The inclusive declaration made by Sheikh Mujib in 1973, which invited non-Bengalis in East Pakistan to pledge allegiance to Bangladesh, ironically led to their civil death unless they culturally conform, amending past mistakes through cultural conversion, and suppressing linguistic and ethnic differences for proof of loyalty to the nation (Siddiqi, 2013). Hence, Not only exclusion but the process of including can be just as violent as seen in this scenario. Moreover, due to civil death, they were constantly being misrecognized by different communities as well which can lead to exclusion as Balibar mentions.

After the initial wave of repatriations that affected EPCAF and military personnel, more than 150,000 people were confined in the physical borders of 116 camps where they lived in unimaginable conditions. They are also separated by an invisible border created by their linguistic and cultural differences which has always stopped them from assimilating with the mainstream society (Siddiqi, 2013).

The camps bear a striking resemblance to the “banlieues” or “ghettos” discussed by Balibar (2015). Similar to the youth in the banlieues of France, these Biharis are now considered part of the Bangladesh nation, possessing public and social citizenship, and yet they are unable to exercise their rights as a citizen (Siddiqi, 2013).

Before 2003, the Biharis lived in a stateless limbo, deemed civil dead with neither a state nor rights. While they were granted citizenship in 2008, they still face challenges in actively exercising their rights in Bangladesh, reflecting a condition akin to passive citizenship (Siddiqi, 2013). Even though it might seem that they are not externally excluded, the existence of exclusionary democracy reveals deep structural inequalities of passive citizens within contemporary citizenship (Balibar, 2015). Moreover, there exists a universal paradox about citizenship while certain people benefit from it, others may suffer, the Biharis in this case are the sufferers of this citizenship.

Passive citizenship is where individuals have the legal status of citizenship but lack the active ability to fully participate in the social and political life of the nation. Balibar's (2015) analogy to the French Revolution, where women were passive citizens initially, reflects a similar scenario to the stranded Pakistanis where individuals have the legal status of citizenship but lack the active ability to fully participate in the social and political life of the nation, and are internally excluded from enjoying their rights. Internal exclusion is when certain people inside a country get the feeling of not belonging when people treat them differently or it can be by expecting them to have their rights within certain limits (Balibar, 2015).

Expanding Arendt's idea of a "right to rights" Balibar (2015) shows the shift from “constituted power” to “constituent power” which means having the active ability to assert one's rights in public spaces and being able to fight for their rights which is an important factor for not getting excluded. While the standard Pakistanis have the constituted rights as they belong to the nation-state of Bangladesh, they do not have ‘constituent power” to actively assert their rights which is a significant reason behind their internal exclusion.

Baibar (2015) discusses that people become part of a territory either by being in the same community or by participating in commerce. Additionally, a lack of mutual recognition within these different communities can lead to exclusion. Similarly, as many of the Bihari people actively sided with the Pakistani army during the war, all Urdu speakers were identified as closely associated with them which isolated them from Bangladeshi communities (Siddiqi, 2013). Additionally, as people like Javed Hasan are still protesting for their right to go back to Pakistan, the mainstream Bangalis regard them as wartime collaborators/ razakars and reject them socially. Moreover, some people officially belong to a community and can feel like they are part of another imagined community which is a conflict that determines who gets to be a citizen (Balibar, 2015). This compares to the older generation of standard Pakistanis like Shoukat Ali who rejects the ruling of Bangladesh and considers themselves part of Pakistan. However, the younger generation of this community doesn’t feel this way which is an ongoing conflict within their community that excludes them from inclusion.

In conclusion, Dina Siddiqi's application of Étienne Balibar's concept of the territorial metaphor of inclusion and exclusion to the Pakistanis who are stranded in Bangladesh reveals the intricate dynamics influencing their social and political situation. Similar to Balibar's framework, the historical, symbolic, and institutional dimensions of exclusion shed light on the difficulties this community faces. The conditions in the camp are similar to what Balibar discusses about banlieues; it emphasizes the difference between legal status and active participation, as well as the persistence of passive citizenship and internal exclusion. The predicament of Pakistanis who are stranded highlights the necessity of a complex conception of citizenship to address deeply ingrained systemic injustices.

***References***

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