**Question 2. 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)**

Key terms: social citizenship, active citizenship, passive citizenship, constituent power, existence in the form of resistance, negative community, recognition, excluded from inclusion, subjects and relationships between subjects

*Answer:*

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 (Siddiqi, 2013). Despite having contributed to the formation of Pakistan, they encountered challenges in Bangladesh after the country's independence, which limited their ability to engage in social and political life.

According to Dina Siddiqi (2013), as a result of the communal riots in India against the Muslim minority, around 699,000 Muslims fled to East Pakistan during the 1947 partition. Again, 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 Urdu speakers and its disapproval of assimilation have collectively shaped the outlook of Bagalis and led to the exclusion of the Standard Pakistanis from inclusion.

Balibar (2015) raises questions about the concept of subjects and relationships between subjects asking who is excluded and who is responsible for exclusion. Subsequently, 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 what happened in the case of the standard Pakistanis.

Exclusion has two aspects such as historical and symbolic that are influenced by each other (Balibar, 2015). Following this, one of the main causes of the exclusion of the Urdu-speaking population was their immigration history and the symbolic nature of different languages and cultures. However, there cannot be an institutional process for exclusion without a rule. Hence, When non-Bengalis in East Pakistan were invited to pledge allegiance to Bangladesh in 1973's inclusive declaration, it ironically resulted in their civil death unless they conformed to the Bengali culture through cultural conversion, and suppressed linguistic and ethnic differences as evidence of their nationalism (Siddiqi, 2013). Therefore, not only exclusion, but inclusion can also be violent, especially when people are forced to assimilate or conform, as in this case, which pushes them to remain excluded.

After the initial wave of repatriations, more than 150,000 people were confined to the physical borders of 116 camps. The camps are remarkably similar to the "ghettos" or "banlieues" that Balibar (2015) discusses. 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 unable to exercise their rights as a citizen due to passive citizenship which is when individuals have the legal status of citizenship but lack the active ability to fully participate in the social and political life of the nation (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 difficulties in actively exercising their rights in Bangladesh, resembling passive citizenship (Siddiqi, 2013). Even though it might seem that as social citizens they are not externally excluded, the existence of exclusionary democracy reveals deep structural inequalities of passive citizens within contemporary citizenship (Balibar, 2015). Furthermore, there is a universal paradox regarding citizenship that states that while some people gain from it, others could be disadvantaged. In this instance, the Biharis are the victims of this citizenship. All these activities led to their exclusion from Bangladeshi communities, resulting in misrecognition and hindering their participation in commerce.

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 are unable to be active citizens by actively engaging in the social and political life of the nation. Additionally, their linguistic and cultural differences have created an invisible barrier that has prevented them from integrating into mainstream society (Siddiqi, 2013). According to Balibar (2015), internal exclusion occurs when certain individuals within a nation feel as though they don't belong there due to being treated differently or being expected to exercise their rights to a certain extent. Hence, the Standard Pakistanis became a negative community facing discrimination, lack of opportunity, and often being treated as second-class citizens.

Developing Arendt's Concept of a "Right to Rights" Balibar (2015) illustrates the transition from "constituted power" to "constituent power," which is the capacity to actively defend and assert one's rights in public spaces, both of which are crucial for avoiding exclusion. Although standard Pakistanis are entitled to certain rights because they are citizens of Bangladesh, one major factor contributing to their internal exclusion is that they lack the "constituent power" to actively exercise those rights resulting in them existing in the form of resistance.

Balibar (2015) discusses that people become part of a territory either by being in the same community or by participating in commerce. Additionally, misrecognition 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 excluded them from inclusion in Bangladeshi communities (Siddiqi, 2013). Furthermore, while individuals such as Javed Hasan, who was featured in the article by Dina Siddiqi (2013), continue to demonstrate their right to return to Pakistan, mainstream Bangalis view them as collaborators during the war and socially reject them.

Members of one community may feel as if they belong to another imagined community, creating a conflict that determines who gets to be a citizen, as discussed in Balibar's (2015) second thesis. This contrasts with the older generation of Standard Pakistanis, such as Shoukat Ali, who oppose Bangladesh's rule and consider themselves to be citizens of Pakistan. However, the younger generation of this community does not share this sentiment, resulting in an ongoing conflict within their community that keeps them from being included (Siddiqi, 2013).

In conclusion, the analysis of Siddiqi's article using Balibar's territorial metaphor sheds light on the challenging struggles faced by Pakistanis who have become stranded in Bangladesh. Their exclusion is a result of historical, symbolic, and cultural factors that emphasize the paradox of citizenship. The persistent challenge of engaging in active participation highlights the intricate dynamics of inclusion within Bangladeshi society. The situation they are facing emphasizes the need for a nuanced understanding of citizenship to address deeply embedded structural injustices.

***References***

Balibar, É. (2015). *Citizenship* (T. Scott-Railton, Trans.). Polity Press. <https://www.amazon.com/Citizenship-%C3%89tienne-Balibar/dp/0745682413>

Siddiqi, D. M. (2013). Left Behind By the Nation: ‘Stranded Pakistanis’ in Bangladesh. *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology and Cultural Studies*, *10*(2), 150–183. <https://doi.org/10.11157/sites-vol10iss2id253>