LEFT BEHIND BY THE NATION:

‘Stranded Pakistanis’ in Bangladesh

Dina M. Siddiqi

Abstract

Page 1 of "Left Behind By the Nation: ‘Stranded Pakistanis’ in Bangladesh" introduces the paper authored by Dina M. Siddiqi. The paper focuses on the concept of the 'stranded Pakistani' or 'Bihari' to examine the peculiar absence of discussion regarding the partition of British India in 1947 within the nationalist history of Bangladesh.

In this page, Siddiqi highlights how the nationalist historiography of Bangladesh struggles to incorporate the partition, mainly due to the perceived inconsistency of East Bengal's strong support for Pakistan in 1947. The author argues that the partition of 1947 cannot be reduced to a single narrative and that its contentious histories continue to influence community and nation-building processes in South Asia.

The text delves into the experiences of 'stranded Pakistanis,' a term that became meaningful after 1971. These individuals mediated their sense of belonging and citizenship through their sacrifices for Pakistan but were later excluded as the new nation, Bangladesh, redefined itself in 1971 following the war.

The page also emphasizes that Bengali nationalism, which tends to overlook the partition, cannot disregard the interconnectedness of the histories of 1947 and 1971. The author suggests that comprehending the role of 1947 is essential for understanding the cultural politics of citizenship, belonging, and national identity in contemporary Bangladesh.

The closing lines of the page include a quote that signifies the challenges faced by those without proper documentation and highlights the enduring existence of individuals despite such difficulties. Additionally, the quote, "We never left Pakistan, Pakistan has gone and left us," reflects the sentiments of individuals living in Geneva Camp, illustrating the sense of displacement and abandonment experienced by the Urdu-speaking migrants.

Analysis:

This introductory page sets the stage for the paper's exploration of the 'stranded Pakistanis' and their complex relationship with the history of partition and nationhood in Bangladesh. It draws attention to the multifaceted nature of the partition of 1947 and its lasting impact on the identity, citizenship, and belonging of Urdu-speaking migrants in Bangladesh. Siddiqi's argument that the histories of 1947 and 1971 are interlinked highlights the need to consider the historical context when addressing issues of citizenship and exclusion in Bangladesh. The page also introduces the idea of 'stranded Pakistanis' and how their experience challenges conventional narratives of nationhood.

**Introduction**

In this introduction to "Left Behind By the Nation: ‘Stranded Pakistanis’ in Bangladesh," Dina M. Siddiqi raises critical questions about the plight of individuals considered 'stranded Pakistanis' in contemporary Bangladesh and their struggles with issues of belonging and citizenship. She contemplates what it means for a nation to have citizens left behind, rooted in their place of residence.

The introduction highlights the perplexing situation where individuals who were once legal citizens found themselves 'officially' declared dead when East Pakistan became Bangladesh. The essay aims to explore the prospects of closure in the face of civil death and official erasure, reflecting on the predicament of 'stranded Pakistanis' in Bangladesh.

Siddiqi emphasizes the need to examine how the dominant narratives and historiography in Bangladesh often evade or erase the complex historical event of the partition of British India in 1947. This evasion is linked to the challenge it poses to the notion of a core Bengali secular identity. Recognizing the 1947 partition also calls for an exploration of East Bengal's role in what is referred to as 'the Pakistan experiment.'

The 'stranded Pakistanis' or Biharis, classified collectively as collaborators during the 1971 War of Liberation, have been excluded from Bangladeshi nationalist discourses. Their presence in present-day Bangladesh challenges the dominant national project and has been rendered unspeakable due to its incongruity with the official narrative. The erasure of the 1947 partition from official memory attempts to hide the inherent contradictions in creating a secular, unified Bengali nation-state.

Siddiqi contends that understanding the history of 1971 without considering 1947 is inadequate and obscures the processes through which categories of national identity are constructed and the dynamics that favor certain narratives while displacing others. The inability of Bangladeshi nationalist historiography to confront the complexities of partition and Pakistan results in the exclusion not only of 'Biharis' but also of other non-Bengali-speaking minorities from national belonging.

Analysis:

This introduction sets the stage for the exploration of 'stranded Pakistanis' in Bangladesh and their complex relationship with the historical events of partition and nationhood. Siddiqi underscores the significance of acknowledging the 1947 partition for understanding the contemporary cultural politics of citizenship, belonging, and national identity in Bangladesh. The text highlights how nationalist narratives often seek to create a homogeneous identity, which can lead to the exclusion of diverse communities. Siddiqi's analysis points to the broader issue of exclusionary politics in the construction of national identity and citizenship.

**Partitioning Histories**

This section delves into the partition of British India in 1947, focusing on the often-overlooked Bengal province and the experiences of its people during this period. While accounts of the 1947 partition have predominantly focused on the Punjab province, characterized by terror, displacement, communal violence, and the redefinition of identities and citizenship, partition processes in Bengal unfolded differently.

Bengal's partition is presented as an ongoing and continuous process rather than a set of isolated and dramatic events. It did not follow a modular pattern and was marked by temporal, scale, and violence-related differences. The section highlights the distinct nature of Bengal's partition compared to the northern India/West Pakistan partition.

One notable outcome of Bengal's partition was the continuous migration of Bengali-speaking Hindu citizens from East Pakistan (later Bangladesh) into West Bengal, India. Paradoxically, those who left East Bengal after 1947 were reclassified as refugees rather than full-fledged citizens in independent India. This paradox illustrates the role of constructions of loss, nostalgia, and yearning for home/nation in shaping refugee identities and imaginaries.

While there are accounts of the experiences of Bengali-speaking Hindus who migrated to West Bengal, there is a conspicuous absence of narratives regarding Bengali-speaking Muslims who sought refuge in East Pakistan during or after 1947. The omission of these voices calls for recognition and critical attention.

The narrative then shifts its focus to the 'stranded Pakistani' or 'Bihari,' a population that endures the long-lasting repercussions of the 1947 partition. This group, consisting of non-Bengali-speaking Muslims, migrated to East Bengal, later East Pakistan/Bangladesh, following communal riots in Bihar in 1946 and the 1947 partition. The Biharis were characterized by linguistic differences from the majority Bengali-speaking population.

For many, the partition did not necessarily imply loss or violence but represented the promise of a better life, particularly for the predominantly Muslim peasantry. It was seen as an opportunity to dismantle economic oppression and end religious and social discrimination. Partition led to significant changes in land ownership, particularly benefiting Muslim groups that could reconfigure socio-economic relations.

However, the conditions of citizenship shifted by 1971. The idea of Pakistan had disintegrated in East Pakistan, with linguistic and cultural factors becoming crucial. The paper emphasizes the role of language, which led to a contest between East and West Pakistan, as language became a site of political and cultural contestation. Bengali-speaking people saw non-Bengali migrants, including Urdu-speakers, as a privileged group, leading to their cultural and economic marginalization.

The section concludes by highlighting the open collaboration of some Urdu-speaking population with the Pakistani army during the Liberation war in 1971, leading to their permanent exclusion from Bangladeshi national belonging. Despite being part of the space of the nation, they were legally stateless and had their identities erased. The paper underscores the lasting impact of these historical events on the Bangladeshi nation and the hostility towards Urdu-speaking communities.

Analysis:

This section provides valuable insights into the partition of British India in 1947, particularly within the context of Bengal, and the consequences for different groups of people. It underscores how the 1947 partition had diverse effects and was an ongoing process rather than a singular event. The paper highlights the complexities of the historical and social dynamics at play, especially regarding the Urdu-speaking communities who found themselves marginalized and stateless. The examination of language as a critical factor in the contestation of identity and citizenship is especially relevant. It demonstrates how the inability to acknowledge the 1947 partition significantly shapes the cultural politics of belonging and citizenship in Bangladesh today.

**Partition’s Ghosts and Cracks in the National Story**

This section discusses the significance of partition in the context of Bengali and Bangladeshi nationalism, emphasizing that the formal erasure of partition in the official narrative is an attempt to maintain the narrative of Bengali secular unity. However, this erasure does not mean that partition is forgotten; rather, it haunts and fractures the national project, occasionally resurfacing in the form of "partition's ghosts."

The text argues that the ambivalence in Bengali/Bangladeshi nationalism can be traced back to the ambiguities surrounding the creation of Pakistan for Bengal's Muslims in 1947. Many people did not fully understand or approve of Pakistan, and the idea of a new nation was uncertain. Partition did not mean the same for everyone, and it marked a significant shift for Bengali-speaking Muslims who were neither entirely Bengali nor North Indian in identity.

Following Bangladesh's sovereignty in 1971, the nation had to distinguish itself from both Bengalis in India and Muslims in Pakistan. The relationship between the terms Bengali, Muslim, and Hindu has been a central concern in Bangladeshi nationalist discourse. This discussion often excludes many groups whose histories are tied to the formation of Bangladesh.

The national story in Bangladesh actively forgets the contentious history of partition, which differs from how it is remembered in India and Pakistan. In these countries, the narrative culminates in the celebration of 1947 as "Freedom at Midnight." However, in Bangladesh, 1947 is seen as a moment of the continuing history of Bengal's colonial domination, symbolizing the transfer of power from the British to West Pakistanis. The official timeline of the nation does not accommodate more complex interpretations of this period, such as the view that 1947 marked the first step towards independence from Hindu dominance.

The text also highlights how the date August 15th, commemorating both Indian and Pakistani independence in 1947, has multiple and shifting meanings in Bangladesh. This date has been complicated by events in 1975 when the assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman took place, altering its significance in the context of the country's history and politics.

In conclusion, the section suggests that the nationalist narrative of Bangladesh cannot comfortably accommodate the complexities and ambiguities of partition. Dominant readings of partition tend to share some assumptions with the two-nation theory, which does not align with the ideology of Bangladeshi nationalism. Bengali nationalism is grounded in the concept of a secular Bengali identity that downplays religious distinctions. Therefore, overt engagement with the violence and tensions of partition threatens this notion of secular nationhood. Partition's legacy continues to influence major trends in Bangladeshi nationalism, even if it remains relatively unacknowledged in public narratives.

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Let's analyze this section in the context of Balibar's ideas about exclusionary politics of citizenship and how it has been employed to keep the Urdu-speaking community of Dhaka away from citizenship rights.

In this section of the text, we can discern how the exclusionary politics of citizenship is at play, especially in relation to the Urdu-speaking community in Bangladesh, commonly referred to as 'Biharis.' Here's the analysis:

Exclusion of 'Stranded Pakistanis' from National Discourse: The text reveals that the Urdu-speaking 'stranded Pakistanis' have been effectively excluded from Bangladeshi nationalist discourse. This exclusion is a manifestation of Balibar's concept of exclusionary citizenship, where certain groups are denied acknowledgment and participation in the national narrative, effectively rendering them invisible or stateless.

Silencing of Historical Identity: The text suggests that the exclusionary politics of citizenship serves to silence the historical identity and experiences of the Urdu-speaking community. By overlooking or erasing the history of the 'stranded Pakistanis,' the dominant national project avoids acknowledging the complexities of identity and border-making processes in practice, as described by Balibar. The exclusion perpetuates the invisibility of this group's history and experiences.

Differential Treatment Based on Collaboration: The analysis delves into the differential treatment faced by the Urdu-speaking community based on their perceived collaboration during the 1971 War of Liberation. This unequal treatment results in their exclusion from citizenship rights. Balibar's idea of exclusion based on internal differentiation within a group is exemplified here, as some Urdu-speakers who collaborated with the Pakistani army were accepted by Pakistan, while others were left in stateless limbo.

Nationalist Desire for Narrative Permanence: The text points out that the exclusionary politics of citizenship is linked to the nationalist desire for narrative permanence. The insistence on a singular, seamless national narrative compels the erasure of histories that do not conform to the dominant narrative. Balibar's notion of exclusion to achieve national purity is evident here, as the national identity is constructed to exclude those whose histories disrupt the desired purity.

Impact on Non-Bengali-Speaking Minorities: The analysis underscores how the exclusionary politics affect not only the 'Biharis' but also all other non-Bengali-speaking minorities. This aligns with Balibar's idea of exclusion not being limited to a single group but extending to other minority communities as well.

In summary, this section of the text illustrates the exclusionary politics of citizenship that has been used to marginalize and deny citizenship rights to the Urdu-speaking community in Dhaka. The analysis draws parallels to Balibar's ideas, highlighting how exclusionary practices can lead to the exclusion of certain groups from the national narrative, identity, and citizenship rights, perpetuating statelessness and inequality.

**The Making of Muhajirs**

In this passage, the text discusses the massive population displacement and migration that occurred during the partition of India in 1947 and how this phenomenon contributed to the formation of the Urdu-speaking community known as 'Muhajirs.' The analysis, in the context of Balibar's ideas, sheds light on the exclusionary politics of citizenship employed to marginalize the Urdu-speaking community in Dhaka.

Population Displacement During Partition: The text highlights that the partition of India led to a massive displacement of people, with millions migrating across newly formed borders. The partition resulted in the emergence of two new nations, India and Pakistan, which were formed along religious lines. This mass migration, driven by religious and communal tensions, sets the stage for the exclusionary politics of citizenship. Balibar's notion of exclusion in this context can be understood as the process through which certain groups were denied citizenship rights and full participation in the newly formed nations.

Numerical Disparities and Exclusion: The text presents census data that reveals numerical disparities between incoming Muslim refugees to Pakistan and those entering East Pakistan (now Bangladesh). The Muslim refugees entering East Pakistan constituted only a small percentage of the total population. This numerical difference reflects a form of exclusion, as many of these refugees, particularly from Bihar, were effectively marginalized within the new state. Balibar's concept of exclusion based on demographic disparities becomes apparent here, as certain groups were numerically insignificant within the nation, making it easier to exclude them from the mainstream citizenship rights and privileges.

The Emergence of the Urdu-Speaking Community: The text discusses how the Urdu-speaking community, known as 'Muhajirs,' began to take shape. This community consisted of migrants from regions such as Bihar and Uttar Pradesh who found themselves in East Pakistan, predominantly for economic reasons and due to violence in their places of origin. The emergence of the Muhajirs illustrates how the exclusionary politics of citizenship shaped the identity of this community. Balibar's ideas on how exclusion influences the formation of particular identity categories are evident here, as the Muhajirs were a distinct community within East Pakistan, shaped by their migration experiences and exclusion from the mainstream Bengali identity.

Perceived Sacrifice and Marginalization: The text also mentions that for many Urdu-speakers, Pakistan came to symbolize the embodiment of the sacrifice made during the 1946 riots. Despite their sense of sacrifice and perceived right to belong to Pakistan, the Urdu-speaking community, particularly the Muhajirs, found themselves in an awkward position. They were caught between the predominantly Bengali population and the Punjabi authorities, suggesting that they remained ostensibly privileged outsiders in the Bengali imagination. This reflects Balibar's idea of exclusion leading to a complex positioning of certain groups within the national narrative, where they are perceived as outsiders despite their historical contributions and sacrifices.

In summary, this passage reveals how the exclusionary politics of citizenship, driven by the events of partition and the formation of new nation-states, shaped the identity and status of the Urdu-speaking community in Dhaka. The numerical disparities, the emergence of the Muhajirs, and their complex positioning within the national narrative all exemplify the impact of exclusion on citizenship rights and identity formation. Balibar's ideas on exclusion help us understand the dynamics at play in the context of the Urdu-speaking community's experiences in East Pakistan.

**Strangers in the Homeland: The Dangerous & Disloyal Muhajir**

This passage delves into the complex and fraught history of the Urdu-speaking community known as 'Muhajirs' in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) and how their identity and position evolved within the context of the new nation-state of Pakistan. Balibar's ideas on citizenship and exclusion provide a lens to analyze how the Muhajirs' experience was marked by a sense of ambiguity, exclusion, and the perception of being dangerous and disloyal non-citizens.

The Emergence of the Term 'Muhajir': The text explains that the term 'Muhajir' initially referred to refugees from India who came to Pakistan during and after the partition. It was used to rally support among those living in Pakistan to welcome and support the incoming refugees. This demonstrates the idea of constructing a common identity based on the act of migration. However, over time, the term 'Muhajir' became increasingly associated with Urdu-speaking Pakistanis, and this shift reflects the ethnicization of the category. In the context of Balibar's ideas, this transition from a broad category of refugees to a specific ethnic group reflects how the definition of citizenship can change based on ethnicity and language.

Complex Identity and Right to Belong: The passage highlights that Urdu-speaking refugees perceived themselves as having the right to belong to Pakistan, viewing their migration as a form of returning to a place that 'belonged' to them as 'Pakistanis.' This sense of entitlement complicated their resettlement, as they felt that they were not in Pakistan due to a kind invitation but by right. Balibar's concept of citizenship as a matter of belonging and recognition becomes evident here. The Urdu-speaking refugees believed they had a rightful place in Pakistan, but the dynamics of resettlement and assimilation challenged this perception.

Divergent Paths in East and West Pakistan: The text also contrasts the experiences of Muhajirs in West Pakistan and those in East Pakistan. In West Pakistan, the Muhajirs eventually formed their own political party and became an influential oppositional movement. In contrast, Muhajirs in East Pakistan found themselves marginalized and did not empathize with the aspirations of the Bengali population. This divergence in political engagement and assimilation reflects how the politics of citizenship can vary within the same country.

Disillusionment and National Memory: The Urdu-speaking community in East Pakistan, particularly Dhaka, was labeled as outsiders and often perceived as privileged non-locals. This structural positioning contributed to high levels of disillusionment, with high unemployment rates and language problems. These factors reinforced the perception of being outsiders, aligning with Balibar's idea of exclusion leading to the marginalization of certain groups.

Association with Atrocities: The Muhajirs in East Pakistan became inextricably linked to the atrocities committed by the Pakistani army during the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971. The text explains that the paramilitary forces, including al Badr and al Shams, were responsible for some of the worst abuses, and Urdu-speakers were perceived to be involved. This perception led to an identity association between Bihari/Razakar and West Pakistani, signifying a dangerous and disloyal non-citizen. In terms of Balibar's ideas, this reveals how exclusion can shape collective memory and identity, where an entire group is remembered for the actions of some.

In conclusion, the passage explores the complex identity and experience of the Urdu-speaking Muhajir community in East Pakistan, using Balibar's concepts of citizenship and exclusion. It underscores the impact of language, ethnic identity, and historical events on the construction of citizenship and belonging within a nation-state.

**Neither Citizens Nor Refugees**

The passage discusses the plight of a specific group, the Urdu-speaking community in Bangladesh, who are often referred to as "stranded Pakistanis" or "Biharis." They are neither considered citizens nor recognized as refugees, which raises questions about their legal and social status, drawing on Balibar's ideas regarding citizenship and exclusion.

Post-War Turmoil: The passage begins by describing the situation immediately after the Bangladesh Liberation War. Many Urdu-speaking individuals were arrested and accused of collaborating with the Pakistani military during the war. Their homes and property were looted and destroyed, and some non-Bengalis were killed. These events reflect a significant degree of social exclusion based on ethnicity.

Return of the Affluent: The text explains that after the war, the most affluent Urdu-speaking individuals left Bangladesh to settle abroad, often in other countries. This pattern of migration suggests that those with financial means were better able to secure their departure. However, those who remained were often individuals without cultural or financial capital, thus deepening their sense of exclusion.

The "Civilly Dead": The passage highlights that until 2003, the Urdu-speaking community in Bangladesh had no national identity or citizenship papers, rendering them "civilly dead." They were labeled as non-locals or non-Bengalis by some and, in government offices, referred to as such. This lack of official recognition speaks to their marginalized status and non-belonging within the nation-state. Balibar's ideas about citizenship being a means of belonging and recognition are relevant here.

Stranded Pakistanis' Identity and Claims: The Stranded Pakistanis General Repatriation Committee (SPGRC) argued that they were Pakistanis stranded in Bangladesh and deserved repatriation to Pakistan, emphasizing that they considered themselves Pakistanis under international law. This assertion reflects a strong belief in their right to belong and be recognized as citizens, as discussed in Balibar's ideas.

Challenges to Refugee Status: The passage also addresses the challenge faced by the Urdu-speaking community when seeking refugee status. UNHCR's definitions and international legal instruments do not readily accommodate their situation. Standard definitions of refugees focus on protecting states and distinguishing refugees from migrants, which leaves this community in a complex double bind regarding their status.

In conclusion, the passage illustrates how the Urdu-speaking community in Bangladesh, often referred to as stranded Pakistanis or Biharis, found themselves in a liminal space where they were neither considered citizens nor recognized as refugees. Balibar's concepts of citizenship, exclusion, and belonging can be used to analyze their predicament, emphasizing how definitions and recognition play a crucial role in determining one's social and legal status within a nation-state.

**Waiting for Pakistan/Civil Death**

This passage provides an analysis of the evolving status of Urdu-speaking individuals in Bangladesh, often referred to as "stranded Pakistanis" or "Biharis." The analysis is carried out with reference to Balibar's concepts of civil death, citizenship, and cultural assimilation.

Involuntary Loss of Citizenship: The passage highlights how the Urdu-speaking community faced an involuntary loss of citizenship in the aftermath of the Bangladesh Liberation War. The declaration by Sheikh Mujib in 1973, offering equal citizenship to non-Bengalis who declared allegiance to Bangladesh, had paradoxical consequences. Those who had applied for repatriation to Pakistan found themselves rendered non-citizens of Bangladesh. This situation raises questions about the fluidity and complexities of citizenship in a post-conflict setting.

Civil Death and Invisibility: The passage introduces the concept of "civil death," distinct from how it has been articulated by scholars like Gauri Viswanathan. In this context, civil death refers to the condition of being rendered invisible from the nation-state and the secular citizenship it offers. Urdu-speaking individuals found themselves in this state of civil death, where they were neither citizens nor refugees. Balibar's ideas regarding the exclusionary aspects of citizenship can be applied here to analyze how individuals can be marginalized and excluded from the nation-state.

Challenging Civil Death: The passage also discusses the legal challenge to the notion of civil death. In the 1984 case of Muktar Ahmed, the High Court Division of the Supreme Court ruled that seeking Pakistani citizenship did not automatically strip one of Bangladeshi citizenship. This legal challenge illustrates the agency of the Urdu-speaking community in reclaiming their citizenship rights and challenging the notion of civil death.

Cultural Conversion and Belonging: To overcome their marginalized status, non-Bengalis were often encouraged to undergo cultural conversion and adopt majoritarian cultural norms. The precondition for belonging to the nation was seen as the suppression of linguistic and ethnic differences, which resonates with Balibar's ideas on the role of cultural assimilation in citizenship.

Generational Shift: The passage also highlights a generational shift within the Urdu-speaking community. Younger Biharis, who were born and raised in the camps, have a stronger connection to Bangladesh. They speak Bengali fluently and have invested energy in becoming Bangladeshi. The Stranded Pakistanis Youth Rehabilitation Movement played a significant role in legal initiatives to secure recognition as Bangladeshi nationals.

Diverse Perspectives: The passage reflects the diversity of perspectives within the Urdu-speaking community. While younger generations embrace Bangladeshi identity and citizenship, some older individuals still consider Pakistan as their home and reject the idea of becoming Bangladeshi citizens. This diversity of perspectives demonstrates the complexity of identity and belonging in post-conflict societies.

In summary, the passage discusses the changing status and identity of Urdu-speaking individuals in Bangladesh, considering concepts such as civil death, citizenship, cultural conversion, and generational shifts. Balibar's ideas on citizenship and exclusion provide a framework for understanding the dynamics at play in this context.

**Yearning for an Elusive Pakistan**

This passage delves into the historical context and changing perspectives of Pakistan regarding the repatriation of Urdu-speaking individuals from Bangladesh, who are often referred to as "stranded Pakistanis" or "Biharis." The passage also discusses the geopolitical factors and political considerations that have influenced Pakistan's stance on repatriation.

1973 New Delhi Agreement and Tripartite Agreement: After the Bangladesh Liberation War, Pakistan initially agreed to repatriate Urdu-speaking individuals under the 1973 New Delhi Agreement and the Tripartite Agreement signed by India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh in 1974. These agreements set specific criteria for repatriation, primarily focusing on those who were domiciled in former West Pakistan, employees of the former central government, and members of divided families. Pakistan initially accepted 147,000 people, and 122,000 were repatriated by 1982.

Shifting Perspectives: The passage highlights the changing perspectives of Pakistani leaders on the issue. Initially, Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto maintained an antagonistic and evasive attitude toward Bangladesh. His primary objective was to secure the release of Prisoners of War. However, his approach shifted after Sheikh Mujib's assassination, and by January 1976, diplomatic and trade relations were established between the two nations. Subsequent regimes had slightly different perspectives on the repatriation issue, depending on the political climate and strategic interests.

Role of Saudi Arabian Organization: General Ziaul Haq promulgated an ordinance banning further repatriation, but under pressure from the Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC), Pakistan recognized Biharis as Pakistani nationals who should be taken back. In 1988, Pakistan signed an agreement with a Saudi Arabian organization, Rabita-al Alam-al Islami, to handle repatriation and rehabilitation. The cost of this migration/repatriation was estimated to be between US$400–500 million.

Continued Debate on Repatriation: The passage indicates that since Zia's death in 1988, the repatriation issue has continued to be influenced by the strategic interests of successive Pakistani governments. The political landscape and the role of the Muhajir Quami Movement (MQM) in Pakistan have also impacted the stance on repatriation. While the PPP has been categorically opposed to the return of Urdu-speakers, Nawaz Sharif has shown enthusiasm for resettling them in Punjab for political gain.

Financial Argument Against Repatriation: The passage concludes by mentioning that the ostensible argument against repatriation is financial. It states that Pakistan claims it cannot incur any expenditure for its "nationals" in Bangladesh, which adds a financial dimension to the ongoing debate on repatriation.

This passage highlights the complex and evolving nature of the repatriation issue and how political, diplomatic, and financial factors have influenced the stances of different Pakistani leaders and governments over time.

**Remapping Memories**

This passage provides an insightful look into the narratives and perspectives of Javed Hasan, an Urdu-speaking individual residing in a camp in Khulna, Bangladesh, who is often referred to as a "stranded Pakistani" or "Bihari." His narrative touches upon various aspects, including his family's history, his perspective on identity and belonging, and his views on Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh. Here are some key points and themes from the passage:

Family History and Migration: Javed Hasan's family originally hailed from Bihar, India. He describes how his father, who was a government employee, was encouraged to migrate to East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) after the partition of India in 1947. His father worked as a stationmaster at Shialdah Railway Station and later became a school headmaster in Saidpur.

Compulsion vs. Choice: Hasan's narrative underscores that for his father's generation, the decision to migrate to East Pakistan was more of a compulsion than a choice. The Muslim League urged government employees to help build the newly formed Pakistan, and this migration was seen as a sacrifice for the Muslim nation.

Shifting Identity and Belonging: Javed Hasan expresses a complex sense of identity and belonging. He notes that he has grown up with nostalgia for a life left behind in India, where Urdu-speaking Muslims had social standing and influence. This suggests that his attachment to India is significant. He distinguishes himself from Bengali-speaking Muslims and implies that they do not fall within his definition of the Muslim community.

View on North Indian Muslims: Hasan argues that Muslims from North India (e.g., UP, CP, and Bihar) who participated in the Muslim League's initiative were the true nationalists and instrumental in creating Pakistan. He suggests that these Muslims had to make sacrifices and were crucial to the nation-building process.

The Issue of Official Recognition: Javed Hasan highlights the challenges faced by Urdu-speaking individuals in Bangladesh. They do not fit the conventional refugee status criteria, and as a result, they struggle to gain official recognition as refugees. This lack of recognition adds to their plight.

Cultural and Political Tensions: He points out that celebrations around historical events in Bangladesh, such as Independence Day and Language Movement Day, can create tensions. The use of Urdu and portrayals of Bihari Razakars in these celebrations angers the local population and strains relationships.

Economic Aspirations: Hasan expresses a desire for economic opportunities, such as having a factory and fair agreements. He suggests that the community wishes to live honestly and contribute positively to society.

In summary, this passage sheds light on the complex identities, historical narratives, and challenges faced by Urdu-speaking individuals in Bangladesh, particularly the older generation that experienced the partition of India and the events leading to the creation of Bangladesh in 1971. Javed Hasan's narrative reflects the nuanced nature of identity and belonging in the context of South Asia's history.

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Balibar's analysis of exclusionary politics of citizenship provides a relevant framework to understand how the Urdu-speaking community in Dhaka has been marginalized and deprived of citizenship rights. Based on the passage provided, we can draw the following insights using Balibar's concepts:

1. Legal and Cultural Exclusion: Balibar's concept of "civil death" is highly applicable here. Javed Hasan, the representative of the Urdu-speaking community, emphasizes that they have been rendered almost invisible from the nation-state and its citizenship. While Bangladesh is recognized as their physical home, their cultural and linguistic differences render them excluded from the Bengali-majority citizenship. The discourse around becoming "Bengali" to access full citizenship rights echoes the exclusionary process of cultural assimilation, as highlighted by Balibar. By insisting that they must fully suppress their linguistic and ethnic differences to belong, the state employs exclusionary politics.

2. Challenges to Inclusion: Balibar discusses the challenges faced by marginalized communities in accessing citizenship rights. The Urdu-speaking community's struggle for official recognition as refugees is in line with Balibar's argument. The failure to categorize them as refugees, despite their displacement and vulnerability, is an exclusionary tactic that prevents them from gaining the rights associated with refugee status.

3. Dichotomy in National Identity: Balibar also explores the dichotomy in national identity and its exclusions. In this context, Javed Hasan's narrative reveals a clear distinction between the Urdu-speaking community and the Bengali-speaking majority. They are seen as 'the other,' and Javed Hasan's definition of the Muslim community does not include Bengali-speaking Muslims. This exclusion from the broader Muslim community aligns with Balibar's discussions of how citizenship can be divided along linguistic, cultural, or religious lines.

4. The Politics of Memory and History: Balibar argues that the politics of memory and history can be used to exclude certain groups from citizenship. In Javed Hasan's account, the Bengali nationalist narrative is underscored by the celebrations of historical events, where the Urdu-speaking community is cast as the 'enemy' by using Urdu. This narrative perpetuates a division and animosity between the Urdu-speaking community and the Bengali majority, aligning with Balibar's analysis of how history can be weaponized to exclude and alienate specific communities.

In conclusion, Balibar's framework of exclusionary politics of citizenship helps to understand how the Urdu-speaking community in Dhaka has been systematically denied citizenship rights, relegated to the status of refugees, and culturally excluded due to their linguistic and ethnic differences. The politics of memory and the state's cultural assimilation requirements further solidify this exclusion. Balibar's theoretical concepts provide a valuable lens for analyzing the complexities of citizenship and exclusion in this context.

**Beyond the Quandaries of National Belonging**This passage from "Beyond the Quandaries of National Belonging" by Yasmin Saikia addresses the complex and paradoxical situation of the Urdu-speaking community (often referred to as Biharis) in Dhaka and their exclusion from citizenship rights in both Pakistan and Bangladesh. The author employs a historical and post-nationalist perspective to analyze the predicament of this community, taking into account the dynamics of the 1947 partition and the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. Several key points can be derived from this passage:

Civil Death and Exclusionary Politics of National Identity: The concept of "civil death" as discussed by Balibar is relevant here. The Urdu-speaking community in Dhaka represents a group that has not left the nation, but rather, the nation has left them. The 1947 partition and the subsequent shifts in national identity in both Pakistan and Bangladesh have excluded them. This exclusion is not only legal but also cultural, as they are pressured to assimilate into the dominant culture, thus negating their linguistic and ethnic differences.

1965-1971: A Moment of Belonging: The passage highlights the paradoxical position of the Urdu-speaking community during the period between 1965 and 1971. They were considered both refugees and citizens, particularly in East Pakistan. However, this brief moment of belonging and inclusion was disrupted by the 1971 war and the birth of Bangladesh.

Reconceptualizing Partition and Nationhood: The passage suggests a reevaluation of partition narratives. It challenges the idea that 1947 and 1971 are separate and contradictory events, proposing that they are interrelated and mutually constitutive. This calls for a more nuanced understanding of how older meanings of partition and national identity were disrupted, displaced, or reconstituted by the 1971 war.

Complexity of National Identity: The passage underscores that national identity and the experience of partition are not uniform but varied. The Urdu-speaking community's diverse experiences, feelings, and responses to the creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh emphasize the need to acknowledge the multifaceted nature of national identity.

The Ambivalence of Partition: Ambivalence and tensions around partition played a significant role in constructing identities, but at times, these very ambiguities erased claims to belonging altogether. The author argues that relying on the idiom of sacrifice was no longer sufficient for the Urdu-speaking community. They were effectively rendered non-citizens and non-refugees in Bangladesh.

Denationalizing History: The author calls for a denationalization of history, moving away from teleological and statist versions of history that often uphold exclusionary nationalist narratives. This shift in historical perspective aims to address the silencing and erasure of certain histories while privileging others. The goal is to reimagine more inclusive and just forms of belonging and citizenship.

In summary, this passage illustrates how the Urdu-speaking community in Dhaka, often referred to as Biharis, has been excluded from citizenship rights due to the shifting dynamics of national identity and the complex historical legacies of the 1947 partition and the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War. It calls for a more nuanced and inclusive approach to understanding national belonging and citizenship.

Final answer.