**How does the idea of citizenship as social closure help us understand the alienation of the indigenous population within the territory of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh?** (Use Brubaker and Balibar’s analytical framework to formulate your answer). (Word Limit: 750, Marks: 10)

The term "indigenous people" refers to communities with distinct social and cultural identities that set them apart from dominant societal groups. From discrimination and land encroachment to restricted educational and economic possibilities, these communities face several obstacles and struggles. By utilizing the frameworks developed by Balibar and Brubaker, we hope to put into perspective the alienation that the indigenous people of the People's Republic of Bangladesh experience.

A fundamental component of the modern political environment is citizenship, whereby each state formally defines its citizenry and categorizes individuals as either citizens or noncitizens (Brubaker, 1992). Citizenship refers to belonging to an organization that a contemporary state provides rather than just residency. Internal citizens are those who, except for outsiders, match the resident population of modern states. This distinction serves as the foundation for the state's legitimacy to represent and further the interests of a nation.

The concept of social closure, as articulated by Max Weber discusses the idea of social closure as limiting or restricting access to certain social interactions or privileges to certain outsiders. Indigenous populations in Bangladesh face social closure resulting in not having access to many basic privileges such as education, employment, and everyday life (Quader, 2008). Moreover, their challenges continue in issues like the restoration of authority and functions to the Chittagong Hill Tracts institutions, the maintenance of the tribal area's distinctive features, the demilitarization of the area, and the rehabilitation of internally displaced people (IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2023). Their state shares similar characteristics with Balibar’s (2020) idea of passive citizenship of women during the French Revolution.

Even though existing in the form of resistance is important, Balibar (2020)mentions negative community which is when a peaceful protest of a group against exclusion takes a turn into a riot, resulting in a higher chance of exclusion in the form of passive citizenship. Despite a peace accord a decade ago, tensions persist in the Chittagong Hill Tracts due to past conflicts between indigenous groups and government forces, occasionally involving reported human rights abuses which have increased the alienation (Quader,2008).

Territorial closer:

According to Balibar (2020), People become part of a territory either by being in the same community or by participating in commerce. Again, a lack of mutual recognition within these different communities can lead to exclusion. The indigenous population's lack of effort to assimilate into mainstream society is vital for their territorial closure. Brubaker (1992) defined territorial closure as people being forced to leave certain territories losing access to all related opportunities and services. Due to limited legal protection, indigenous people frequently experience territorial closure as their lands are invaded and settled by outsiders. Hence, this makes it difficult for them to reclaim historically occupied territories. Additionally, government actions are increasingly taking over Indigenous lands (Quader, 2008).

In this contemporary world, territorial states are unable to expel someone without compelling them to remain elsewhere. When one state gains something, another loses, and exclusion and expulsion turn into zero-sum games (Brubaker, 1992). Because of this, the indigenous people of our nation are citizens of Bangladesh but are nevertheless excluded from other states and territorial rights because of their different cultures.

Ethnocultural closer:

Modern states aim to be associated with a particular group of people who belong to a particular nation, not just with a piece of land. Individuals who don't fit the requirements to be accepted into the group are viewed as outsiders. According to Brubaker (1992), ethnocultural closure can occur through the direct exclusion of particular groups, such as the indigenous people of Bangladesh who are marginalized due to their ethnicity, or by the exclusion of people who don't fit into predetermined categories.

Domestic closure, on the other hand, keeps noncitizens out of various aspects of civic life, including voting, serving in the military, and working in public office, as Brubaker (1992) explains. A fundamental component of this domestic closure is the concept of the nation-state, whose membership is restricted and exclusive. The indigenous population faces several difficulties, such as marginalization, lack of infrastructure and access to larger markets, and discrimination. The state's conceptual and legal maintenance of a border between its indigenous and non-indigenous citizens can be understood as a manifestation of this closure, which is reflected in the exclusion and discrimination experienced by the indigenous population. They are being internally excluded as Balibar(2020) discusses when certain people inside a country get the feeling of not belonging because people treat them differently or expect them to have their rights within certain limits.

Citizenship-based closure is formal, regulated by articulated norms, and formal identification routines. However, it may overlap with informal closure against ethnocultural nonnationals, where enforcement is biased by informal factors (Brubaker, 1992). Although citizenship is meant to be impartial, in reality, indigenous people frequently experience discrimination because of their cultural identity. Frontline gatekeepers are primarily responsible for limiting access to different areas, such as the territory or labor market. Moreover, a dynamic aspect of Balibar (2020) shows exclusion can be not just physically separating a community but also being excluded from participation in economic activities, communication, and mobility.

According to Brubaker (1992), citizenship can be used as a tool for closure by restricting access to the status of citizenship to a certain group while bestowing certain rights to another. Although citizenship is nearly universal worldwide, it is locally exclusive, as each state sets limits on who can be granted citizenship at birth or obtain it through naturalization. How alienation may occur for indigenous populations in Bangladesh is explained by the concept of citizenship as social closure. Indigenous people are excluded from full civic participation due to the restrictive ascription of citizenship and differences in the naturalization of policies, which affects their access to rights, benefits, and activities within Bangladeshi territory.

As discussed by Balibar (2020), The very universal ideals that are supposed to bring people together frequently coexist with practices that exclude certain populations. Although citizenship presents benefits, it can also present obstacles for indigenous communities. This complex relationship illustrates the dual character of citizenship, showing how it can benefit marginalized groups like Bangladesh's indigenous communities while also posing challenges to them.

Conclusion: Need a good start line   
Indigenous communities face barriers to rights, education, and employment due to ethnocultural, territorial, and domestic closures. The persistence of their conflicts underscores the ongoing challenges. Utilizing Brubaker and Balibar's frameworks, we explored the profound impact of citizenship as social closure on their alienation. Even though citizenship is supposed to be impartial, it frequently collides with cultural identity, leading to biased enforcement and increased alienation of the country's indigenous populations.

***References***

IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. (2023, October 26). *Bangladesh - IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs*. <https://www.iwgia.org/en/bangladesh.html#:~:text=Indigenous%20Peoples%20still%20face%20challenges,rehabilitation%20of%20the%20internally%20displaced>.

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