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**International Migration and Social Change in India:  
The North-East Evidence**

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**Abstract**

*Migration has become a universal phenomenon in recent times with a significant impact on the developmental of the economy. The north-eastern region of India surrounded by international borders is home to variety of ethnic groups which is in the state of transition due to the uncontrolled migration from the neighbouring countries and states. The terrains comprising of forested hills, low-lying plains, riverline and human settlements in the absence of proper roads makes the task of effective border policing an extremely difficult task. Against this backdrop the study analyses how the north-eastern region has been the victim of such cross-border immigration. It looks into the demographic and social implications associated with this cross-border migration in the region. Immigration is creating the opportunity for few states of the region to employ cheap and skilled labour but perhaps at the cost of political and numerical marginalisation of the indigenous people in their own states of origin. Due to the transborder character of the region; migration and diversity are giving rise to social tensions between the natives and the settler migrants and more so among the natives. Moreover, the porous international borders particularly the Indo-Bangladesh border is compounding the problem of illegal migration in the region. The continuous inflow of migrants both legal and illegal in the region as compared to limited outflow is leading to severe consequences like internal displacement, growth of terrorism industry and boost in illegal trade of human and child trafficking and smuggling of arms and narcotic. The massive illegal immigration is posing a grave danger to the security, social harmony and economic well-being of the country. It is only through the securitisation of the borders along with the states extending protection to the rights of the migrants could secure migration and maximise its benefits.*

**Key words: immigrants, cross-border migration, displacement, terrorism**

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**Introduction:** The migration of people across countries in search of better livelihood and security is a continuous process. Whether migration is permanent or temporary in nature it

has been ongoing since the time humans began building communities. Migration is defined as a move from one migration defining area to another, usually crossing administrative boundaries made during a given migration interval and involving a change of residence (UN 1993). Internal migration involves a change of residence within national borders; whereas international migration involves a change of residence outside national borders. Migration has become a universal phenomenon in modern times. In most countries, industrialization, urbanisation and economic development have been accompanied by large scale movements of people from villages to towns, from towns to other towns and from one country to another country. Whether it is rural-urban migration, intra-state migration, interstate migration or international migration, it has a strong impact on the size, composition and distribution of population. More importantly, migration influences the social, political and economic life of the people. In India, migration turns out to be an important factor in organisation of regional and urban space. The history of the North-eastern part of India has been a history of migration.

The Northeast region of India surrounded by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal, Myanmar and China contains a variety of ethnic and religious groups that is rapidly changing as a result of uncontrolled migration from other parts of the country and neighbouring states. The region consists of the seven states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. Each state of the region shares an international boundary. Migration can be linked with various factors. In the context of North East of India, population dynamism is one such factor. There has been a high growth rate of population in these regions. It is characterized by underdeveloped agrarian economy with a very backward industrial sector and on the other hand a very inflated service sector. Even so, agriculture remains the backbone of the economy and is dominated by shifting cultivation. In terms of inflows and outflows in the region, as stands in Census 2011 the state of Manipur is unique in the entire Northeast as outflow is three times higher than the inflow in the state. Assam is losing population due to internal migration to other states of India but compensated by international migration. So, the state presents a balanced ratio of inflow and outflow. The rest of the states of Northeast are gaining population predominantly due to internal migration, whereas Tripura gained population more from international compared to internal migration. Northeast region has a plethora of small ethnic communities, each fiercely protecting their respective identities. In recent times, there has been apprehension of being overwhelmed by huge inflows of migrants. Recently, National Register of Citizens has been conducted in Assam. Many states have demanded that Inner Line Permit be established to restrict and manage inflows of migrants to the region.

Against this backdrop, the present study is an attempt to capture the magnitude of inflows to the region from border countries and the kind of repercussions associated with such international migration. In other words, the study explores whether the process of migration in general and immigration in particular to the north-eastern states is able to maintain social harmony in the region or is it inviting conflicts and is a source of potential threat to the

region. To what extent the securitisation of the borders can protect the region and secure migration is also debated.

### **Objectives:**

The main objectives of the study are:

To provide a vivid description of the emerging trends of in- migration to North-eastern states of India from its bordering countries.

To identify the nature and reasons of such migration and analyse the economic, social and political consequences of this migration.

To look into the challenges initiated through the process of immigration and how adversely it affects the economy of the region, national security and social environment.

### Literature survey

Studies related to the present one is few in number. A recent study by Lusome and Bhagat (2020) analysed in details the migration intensity in Northeast India taking into consideration both internal and international migration together and its impact on the region. Singh (2009) described the worrisome state of North-east India with special reference to Nagaland in the context of illegal immigration and underlined the need for time-bound strategies to prevent the same. Ray Chaudhury and Ghosh (2021) discusses how the phenomenon of trans-border migration poses a challenge to the territorial and demographic boundaries of nation-states and points to the dichotomous relationship between state security and human security. Sammadar (1999), Hazarika (2000), (Datta 2004), described the contributing factors responsible for migration in the north east region. Kumar (2006) highlighted the social tension and conflicts that had arisen as a result of persistent labour migration from Bangladesh to India with reference to the North Eastern states of Assam, Meghalaya. Nandy (2003, 2005) condemned the massive immigration from Bangladesh as a “demographic invasion” of India.

The present study focuses specifically on cross-border migration and its long-term implications for the North eastern states of India as a whole. It discusses the risks of the immigrants and also India as a home country. Further it emphasizes the need for improving planning for international mobility, encouraging legal migration and safeguarding the rights of the migrants for maximising the benefits of migration.

### Data and Methodology

The data used to analyse cross border migration and its impact in the Northeast India has been obtained from secondary sources like Census of India, 2011, 2001 and migration statistics. Using a rapid synthesis of available evidences from the extant literature the study proposes a conceptual and recommendation framework in the context of adversities associated with illegal immigration in the region.

### Trends in inflows and outflows

An immigrant is a person living in a country other than the place of his or her own birth. Basically, an immigrant is an international migrant. An immigrant in the North-eastern states of India is any person migrating to the north-eastern region from other countries.

What is observed in this region is inflow of international migrants or immigrants, but with respect to the outflow of the people from the region by crossing the border and entering other countries is almost insignificant. The out migration from the region is mainly restricted to within north-east region (intra-state) or to the rest of India. Manipur and Assam are out-migrating states, while the remaining states gained migrants. With in-migration dominating the migration scenario in the north-east region, it is necessary to analyse in detail the trends in in-migration and out-migration in the region. Before looking into the recent trends of immigration to the states, the history of the post- colonial foreign population influx into the north east, is briefly discussed.

#### Influx from Burma (now Myanmar)

Burmese refugees have been fleeing to India since colonial time. Once such major flow had been of Burmese people of Indian origin mainly to Manipur followed Mizoram and little to other parts of north east during the second world war.

#### Influx from Bhutan:

Lhotsampa (Nepali settled in Southern Bhutan) fled to Nepal and India in 1991. Most of them went to eastern Nepal and a few entered Assam in the North eastern region of India and West Bengal where they mingled with the local population easily.

#### Influx from Nepal

The Nepali people migrated to the region as soldiers and manual labourers during the colonial period and settled here subsequently. Some Nepalis who earned their livelihood as cultivators and graziers were assisted by the colonial government in entering Nepal. The Indo Nepal friendship treaty of 1950 and two other similar treaties of 1951 and 1956 also facilitated their settlement in the North-east.

#### Influx from Bangladesh

The maximum number of immigrants in north east were from Bangladesh (then East Pakistan or East Bengal). When the British first came to Assam, and found immense fallow lands with very few people to cultivate and pay revenue; new wasteland settlement rules were introduced. This initiated the process of importing peasants from Bangladesh. The peasant migrants were lured by easy settlement rules and infrastructural development. Gradually the east Bengali peasants, mostly Muslims spread to all parts of Assam and beyond to other states in the north eastern region. Being hardy and out of desperation for a livelihood, they settled in available land and also in the uncultivable stretches of land and began to produce food grains.

Table 1: Inflow of migrants to NE states by region 2011 and sex (female to male) ratio

States	North	West	Central	South	East	North-east	Immigrants	Sex ratio of immigrants
Arunachal Pradesh	2.6	0.4	4.4	1.6	19.7	63.9	7.4	1097
Assam	7.4	0.7	6.4	1.4	42.9	23.0	18.2	1899
Manipur	8.8	1.7	4.4	2.5	18.1	52.6	11.8	1847

Meghalaya	4.8	0.8	3.1	1.7	18.0	65.0	6.6	874
Mizoram	1.4	0.3	1.0	1.0	5.8	63.5	27.1	1003
Nagaland	4.3	0.6	3.9	2.2	20.9	62.5	5.6	955
Tripura	0.5	0.1	0.6	0.3	10.3	16.4	71.8	1683
North-east	7.1	0.8	6.4	1.9	41.7	0.0	42.1	1681
India	19.2	8.0	26.8	13.6	21.6	1.7	9.2	2120

Table 1 shows the percentage distribution of migration to Northeast states from various regions of the country. The number of international migrants in Northeast India has declined to 376 thousand in 2011 from about 444 thousand in 2001. There has been 15% decline in the inflow of international migrant to the region in 2011 as compared to 2001.

Taking the Northeast as a region, it is seen that 42% of migrants have originated from other countries. In Tripura, about 72% are immigrants coming from the neighbouring countries. Except Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Nagaland, in the rest of the states of Northeast, the contribution of international migrants has been higher than the national average. It is highest in Tripura followed by Mizoram, Assam and Manipur respectively. The share of international migration has been found to be higher than the share of migration from other regions of India, but East India, in almost all the states of Northeast. The only exception being Mizoram where the proportion of immigrants also crosses the share of migrants from the eastern region of India. There is a low mobility within the states of Northeast region as compared to the rest of the country. Arunachal Pradesh is the only state having percentage of migrants higher than the country average. The lowest mobility within the state is observed in the states of Manipur, Meghalaya and Nagaland. While intra district migration dominates migration in the region, states like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Meghalaya have a significant interstate migration as well. The share of immigrants in the state of Tripura is higher than the share of interstate migrants. Female migration dominates migration in the country as well as most of the states.

Table 2: Distribution of immigrants by place of last residence (in %)

States	Bangladesh	Nepal	Myanmar	Elsewhere in Asia	America	Africa	Europe + Oceania	Total
Arunachal Pradesh	36.9	47.8	3.3	7.5	3.3	0.5		11
Assam	58.1	7.9	0.3	13.8	11.2	7.8	1.0	110
Manipur	15.0	20.9	12.3	19.9	6.8	17.8	7.3	3
Meghalaya	30.4	46.8	0.2	13.2	4.8	2.4	2.3	8
Mizoram	5.2	6.4	83.6	1.2	1.1	0.3	2.0	15
Nagaland	2.1	72.9	5.3	9.7	3.8	2.5	3.7	6
Tripura	96.8	0.1	0.0	0.8	1.5	0.4	0.4	222
North-east	76.4	6.4	3.8	5.3	4.5	2.7	0.8	376
India	42.0	14.2	1.0	25.0	7.3	6.9	3.6	5491

About 59% of international migrants in the region have moved to the state of Tripura. Another 29% migrated to Assam and the remaining 12% are divided among the remaining five states. From Assam, the immigrants are going to other states of the region. In recent times, Nagaland along with Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur has attracted a large number of immigrants. About three-fourth of international migrants in the Northeast moved from Bangladesh, 6% from Nepal, 4% from Myanmar and the rest from other countries. Migration from Bangladesh constitutes the major contributor of international migration in the states of Tripura, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. International migration in Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh and Meghalaya is dominated by Nepali migrants, while migration from Myanmar dominates the international flow in Mizoram.

Table 3 explores the reasons for international migration in the Northeast states. The migrants actually moved with household (40.2%) and this emerged as the most important reason for migrating to Northeast India followed by 'others' reason (32%) across all the states of the region. About 9% of the international migrants have moved for work reasons, while around 18% have moved for the reason of marriage. Migration for work is observed highest in the state of Nagaland (38%), followed by Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram (28% each) and Meghalaya (17%). The finding seems to indicate more migrants from Nepal and Myanmar have migrated for work related reasons than migrants from Bangladesh.

Table 3: Reasons for migration among immigrants in Northeast India (in %)

States	Work	Education	Marriage	Moved after Birth	Moved with Household	Others
Arunachal Pradesh	27.8	1.2	9.0	0.5	35.8	25.7
Assam	8.7	0.4	22.8	1.3	32.2	34.6
Manipur	8.7	1.4	24.5	1.8	30.7	32.9
Meghalaya	17.2	2.8	17.4	2.5	29.4	30.8
Mizoram	27.4	0.7	11.7	0.7	35.7	23.8
Nagaland	37.8	3.6	13.0	0.9	23.3	21.4
Tripura	5.7	0.3	15.9	0.5	45.6	32.0
North-east	8.9	0.5	17.6	0.8	40.2	32.1
India	11.2	0.9	22.8	2.8	33.1	29.1

So, with international migration under consideration; in-migration seems to dominate the north-east states of India. This opens up a window of opportunity for the states of Northeast to capitalize on the skills and the experiences of the international migrants. It is true that migration in the context of globalization brings opportunities but at the same time vulnerability and discrimination cannot be ignored either.

The primary reason for migrating to north -eastern region in India seem to be voluntary rather than forced; basically, accompanying their household who migration might have been economic and necessity driven. But the outcome associated with this cross-border migration

is rather adverse for the migrants in the destination states; and more so for the original inhabitants of the region. It is rather difficult to determine who is an immigrant and who is a citizen in the North Eastern part of India and some other border regions. In this region citizenship debates are contentious, and civil rights are denied for generations, let alone social rights. The immigrants along with the natives in the region face several challenges which leaves them in an unsecured and abandoned state. The declining trend in the inflow of immigrants to the north-eastern states perhaps exposes the multidimensional conflicts in the north-east viz. between settler and indigenous communities, between settler and settler community and the most common being between indigenous communities and settler communities.

### **Challenges faced by migrants**

#### **Internal Displacement**

One of the worst economic consequences of in-migration in the north-east region has been displacement. Displacement is one's move from the place of habitual residence. The primary cause in many postcolonial instances of internal displacement can be attributed to conflicts. In case of the North eastern region ethnic conflicts have led to internal displacement or displacing native workers in the region which in turn might have affected the inflow in the region in recent times. As the region has received immigrants as economic migrants and ecological victims from the neighbouring countries of Nepal and Bangladesh primarily and also from Myanmar, it has caused the Northeast's population to swell. The increase in population led to a competition for resources and jobs, as both land and opportunities turned out to be scarce and soon such competition singled out migrant communities as people to be sent back to their countries of origin. Almost all the states of Northeast India have, at some time or the other, experienced political mobilization and organized violence against migrants, anti-outsider movements leading to victimization and expulsion of the communities of migrant origin and at times even ethnic cleansing of the nonindigenous groups. Some glimpses of such conflict -induced internal displacement are as follows.

In Tripura the indigenous tribals is now a minority; the majority Bengalis who migrated mainly from Bangladesh have had to face frequent violence and compromise with their security in the destination country. In the course of many confrontations with the Tripura tribals, a large number of Bengalis has been displaced. Similarly, many individuals from the east Bengali Muslim community have been displaced. Even the Nepali immigrants to north east after their advent came into conflict with some of the hill communities. In Meghalaya, since 1930 the Nepalis had a stressed relationship with the Khasi tribals. Finally, large scale violence broke out between the two communities and the Nepalis were expelled from the state of Meghalaya. In Assam, with the beginning of the Assam movement, the settler communities or the migrants like the Hindus and Muslims of East Bengal and the Nepalis were identified as foreigners and compelled to leave the region. Again, the Bodo movement displaced many Nepalis from the districts of Kokrajhar and Chirang in Assam. The migrants, especially the foreign migrants who settled in the North east witnessed recurring

incidences of internal displacement as an outcome of the various types of clashes between them and indigenous communities. What began as ethnic strife between 'indigenous' and 'foreign' groups turned into ethnic clashes between populations that had essentially become local to the area. The violence has often been directed against civilians, as the rebels' attacked villages, massacred residents and burned houses to compel other ethnic groups to vacate disputed territory and move to ill-equipped and inadequately defended displacement camps.

These internally displaced populations which largely includes the immigrants were left to fend for themselves. With all assets and property lost, no livelihood options to depend upon, constant fear of attacks, these displaced migrants roamed about uncared for. Sometimes they temporarily settled in government lands or forest area where chances of displacement were even higher. Many were compelled to live at the mercy of touts and middlemen who gave them an impression of settlement but at exorbitant prices which was mostly not affordable by the displaced masses. The worst sufferers were those who before displacement had not proper deeds for their land. It happened with the immigrant Muslim internally displaced people who for not having such deeds were easily uprooted from their forest villages being identified as encroachers. As a result of their status as encroachers there was delay in their rehabilitation process and the responsibility of rehabilitation shifted to district administrators in their places of origin rather than in the destination states.

The population explosion in the region due the rapid inflow of immigrants not only displaced the native workers and made them unemployed; but crowding out led to the possibility of decreasing wage level. Also, there was increased financial burden on the state government as the government had to increase the expenditure on education and health to extend these facilities to the immigrants.

### **Illegal migration and terrorism**

Bangladesh is one of the most populous and poorest countries in the world. Further, the country is also highly prone to natural calamities, such as floods, cyclone, drought, riverbank erosion and landslides. Hence, Bangladesh is a major source of labour, but mainly of low-skilled and unskilled workers. Over the years, a large number of people have voluntarily migrated for both long and short-term employment, which is an important livelihood strategy for its large population. But, unfortunately not all immigrants who entered the North eastern region of India can be identified as legal immigrants.

In the border state of Tripura there was a regular influx of wage earners, rickshaw pullers and scavengers and beggars from the bordering areas of Bangladesh on a day-to-day basis. Similar picture is observed even in case of migrants coming from Bangladesh to Assam. They basically took advantage of a parallel system of border control in the state where by making payment to border security forces of both countries with the help of middlemen called 'linemen', they obtained tokens or passes to cross the border to India. The quasi-legal system at the border areas is common knowledge among people. Hence, the migrants who take advantage of this system are often referred to as illegal migrants. Added to this

bad reputation the immigrants or border-crossers continuously encountered the burden of danger and expenditure which was difficult to avoid being a part of the extra-legal system. The recent trend which reflects that majority of immigrants in the Northeast moved from Bangladesh is consistent with the inflow in the post-colonial years. Economic compulsions seemed to be the main cause for the illegal influx which was manifested in the sudden increase in population figures. Additionally, as large-scale and persistent influx of population from Bangladesh into India's north-east continues; it has resulted in a phenomenon that is visibly reshaping and transforming not only the demographic, but also ethnic, linguistic and religious profile of large parts of the region [Hazarika 2000]. This phenomenon has generated a host of destabilising political, social, economic, ethnic and communal tensions in the region.

The Indo-Bangladesh border is geographically porous and hence difficult to keep under close surveillance due to its hilly terrain in the north-east. It is alleged that among the illegal migrants, many militants are also present, who enter into India to carry out the terrorist activities. Thus, a fallout of this massive influx of population has been that the region has opened up to radicalism and to a network of fundamentalist campaigns. This in turn has been effective in plaguing governance and peace in the north-east. Moreover, with the breakdown of the institutions of civil governance, slow economic growth, lack of adequate employment opportunities, particularly for the educated youth in the region, terrorism has entrenched itself as a lucrative industry. With almost all the major terrorist movements operating in the region enjoying external support and safe-haven in foreign countries, the military response has had very limited success. North-east India represents a complex arena of foreign involvement. There was outbreak of several ethnic insurgencies in the region where Pakistan, China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh have played a role in the region. The terrorist organisations operating in the region have formed linkages with both state and non-state actors in foreign countries. These linkages have provided valuable assistance, which include financial and organisational support, weapons, training and operational cooperation. Government sources reveal that the terrorist organisations in the region have been receiving arms as well as money from foreign countries. Pakistan's ISI has been active in Bangladesh supporting militant movements in North East. Arms were primarily emerging from Bangladesh, Myanmar and Thailand while money was flowing in from non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The fact that the region shares 98 per cent of its borders with Bangladesh, China, Myanmar and Bhutan rendered the task of establishing linkages across the borders relatively easy. Studies revealed that terrorist groups in both Assam and Nagaland have received major arms consignments from China from time to time. Similar bases and camps are also there in and around Myanmar bordering the Indian states of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur and Mizoram. Myanmar have deep-rooted historical-cultural ties with many of the tribes in the region and thus have been known to provide support to terrorist groups by offering training facilities and safe havens. The role of Bhutan and Nepal has largely been those of accessories. The two nations have provided shelters as well as transit facilities to separatist groups from the north-east. The continuous

demographic destabilisation of the region on account of unchecked migration continues to be the most significant obstacle to peace in the region. Indiscriminate external support to all terrorist outfits, irrespective of ideology creates further barriers to peace. The lucrative criminal economy of terrorism and a counter-terrorism policy that seems to reward the terrorist does not do much to improve the situation.

**Trafficking:** Immigrants to the north-eastern states not only provide cheap labour, but are more willing to take up jobs which native workers normally avoid. The presence of immigrants is increasingly being felt in the major marketing areas of Dimapur, Nagaland and control businesses that deal with second-hand clothes, bamboo, thatch, chicken, fish and vegetables. As a result, unemployment among unskilled and semi-skilled natives has also gone up. This is another reason why many areas in the north-east has become insurgency-ridden areas. Informal trade has turned out to be the alternative source of income for many such natives in the region. A remote and isolated border town of Moreh, in the north eastern region frontier, immediately adjacent to Myanmar has turned into a trafficking hotspot in the recent years. Previously, Moreh, situated in Manipur was a source of trafficking victims rather than a transit area from where women and under-aged girls from Manipur, were trafficked to other provinces of India as well as to countries in Southeast Asia, to work in the sex trade. However, in 2019 and thereafter men and woman from Nepal were being sent to Southeast Asia, West Asia and the Middle East via Moreh which is now a transit point for drug smuggling and human trafficking. In Moreh's Burmese neighbouring towns, there exist sizeable Nepali trading communities descended from Gurkha soldiers who fought in the British Army during the Second World War. These communities arranged for the transit accommodation and onward transport of trafficking victims along the Asian Highway thereby rendering support to this deep-rooted smuggling system. Besides terrorism, trafficking, another serious political consequence of such cross-border migration is that the illegal immigrants act as a vote bank for various parties in the state. Most of the Bangladeshi immigrants have got their names enlisted in the voting list illegally, thereby claiming themselves as citizens of the state. The immigrant population act as a vote bank for political parties in Assam.

**Denial of human rights:** In the large segment of informal workers in the destination country, there is significant immigrant population from neighbouring countries. However, for this immigrant population often civil rights are not also provided, let alone social rights (Pellissery et al. 2014). Their civil status is a matter of political contention. Often the migrants, including members of their families are subject to detention much more readily than are nationals, sometimes under abusive conditions. Undocumented migrants in particular are often arrested, detained and expelled without being able to defend themselves in accordance with due process. Being a part of the illegal influx into the states and without any work permit, these immigrants are not guaranteed a regular income. Such migrants especially are deprived of their human, including labour rights. Hence, their ability to benefit from migration and contribute to the development of their host societies is

compromised. The promotion of migrants' human rights, social inclusion and integration enables them to lead economically productive as well as culturally and socially enriching lives which is denied particularly in case of foreign migrants. Added to these economic and political consequences, the social consequences include identity crisis and environmental degradation.

**Conclusion:** Migration is a continuous process and almost all the countries across the globe are part of this process. However, every country including India aspires to regulate migration according to their requirements. But not all countries are successful and hence illegal cross-border migration is becoming a matter of concern. The study analyses how trans-border migration poses a challenge for the North-Eastern region in India. The migration to the region is economic necessity induced migration and the migrants are faced with economic and identity crises. But, the immigrants who are actually the settlers are thereby a competitor for economic resources like land, water. The cross-border migration contributes to unemployment among the natives who are continuously being replaced by the low skilled immigrants. Further, with illegal migrants being added to the voter's list it is creating pressure on the states, especially the small ones seeking to provide adequate education, health and housing facilities. Hence, their presence is perceived as a potential threat, capable of altering the demographic and political profile of the region and also the cultural pre-eminence of the local population. On top of all these, migration has emerged as the monumental security threat for the nation -states. The security aspect has been getting ruined with the emergence of extremist groups who are silent supporters of the illegal migration, development of terrorism industry and increased growth of trafficking and smuggling. With the 'isolationist tendencies of the states in the region and the negative perception of the immigrants as usurpers of land, jobs, security, culture and dominance of the local people propels the phenomenon of securitisation of borders. Thus, to protect the region from these vulnerabilities and restore social harmony, the immediate remedial measure should be securitisation of the border by strengthening border policing. Imparting awareness regarding the ill effects of uncontrolled immigration among the border officials and also the general population should be carried out simultaneously. A regulated cross border migration is perceived to be an immediate solution from the domain of states' security; but until the rights of the undocumented migrants are protected, the potential of migration as a true contributor in the development of the region cannot be guaranteed.

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