Introduction

Geography and Politics of Refugees in South Asia: A Study of Chakma and Tibetan Refugees in India

Introduction

The refugee movements from their established and known habitat emerged with the birth of the territorial nation-state. These movements have geographical and spatial connotation, as they are dictated through the principle of distance-decay and the volume is inversely proportional to the increasing distance, that is, distance from the place of origin to the place of destination control the number of refugees reaching the destination. The refugee movements are the products of several forces. The refugees are mostly caused by the enlarged international conflicts, violence such as the World Wars, reorganization of the boundaries of nation-states, intensification of ideological differences, international power-politics, racism etc.

The present day refugees problem are to be distinguish from the refugee problem of the earlier times, because of its much enlarged orbit, variety of causes, political complexities and almost interminably wide range of problem-solving efforts. And it is to be noted that in recent years, the refugee movements and forced movements not only increases in number, but also assumed religious, racial and ideological characters.

The refugee problem has aroused deep human concern and extensive research work has been done on every refugee phenomenon, particularly so long as it remained a current topic. Such concerns have expressed themselves under three broad themes:
International relations and politics; Humanitarian articulation of the human condition of refugees groups; and Academic interests in the patterns and process of change in cross-cultural situation and under conditions of distress. However, the humanistic dimensions have generally received prominence in all literature on refugee groups.¹

The refugee movements in the South Asian region emerged with the birth of the nation-state with the partition of India and Pakistan in 1947 and later due to the birth of Bangladesh in 1971. Movements of people have always influenced evolution of historical and cultural relations in South Asia, but in the post-colonial phase of the region’s history, such movements have frequently been of forced or in voluntary in nature. And there is a growing significance of refugees’ flows as an area of concerned in the South Asian affairs.

The issues of refugee movements become more important if looked at from the nature of population composition of the South Asian region. Often state repression for ethnic or political reasons, or failure of the state to provide economic or social sense of security has been the main cause of such involuntary or forced movements of people, both within and across the territorial boundaries. The states especially in the South Asian region are not yet stabilized. In the process of nation-building many nation-states persecuted and push out minorities and those groups of people who refused to conform to the ideological or religious identities of the dominant groups. Many minorities group dissatisfied with the attitudes and policies of the dominant groups, have resorted to call for self-determination and right to statehood even at the expenses of the fragmentation of the state. This contributed to political instability, conflict, unrest and finally in large number of refugees. The

continuous, porous borders and socio-cultural groups across the border in the region added to the easy movement of refugees.²

Refugees exhibit the problem of national integration, national security, problem of settlement and resettlement in all areas affected. There are differences on the issues of repatriation and resettlement of the refugees. An atmosphere of distrust and hostility between the countries continue to symbolize instability and insurmountable problem in the region. It is therefore, important to study the nature and causes of the emergence of the refugee problem by critically reviewing and assessing the spatial locations of refugees and the nature of ethnic conflicts arising out of and causing instability in the South Asian region.

In addressing the complex refugee phenomenon in the South Asian region we find the movement of refugees not only within and across the states' territorial boundaries of the region but also refugees that generates from the adjoining region. In this study the two groups of refugee communities – one that generates within the region and other that flows from outside the region – the Chakmas from CHT Bangladesh and the Tibetan from Tibet (China) are taken up.

India with it's location has a long, contiguous and porous border with China (Tibet), Nepal and Bhutan in the North, Pakistan in the West and Myanmar in the East. Except with Sri Lanka and Maldives other South Asian Nations have borders with India by land. These undefined, contiguous and porous borders make easy movement of people across the borders. It is a common phenomenon that an ethnic group when faced persecution, alienation, etc., in their own country may seek refuge in the neighbouring countries, e.g, the Chakma and the Tibetan refugees in India. The Tibetan refugees are dispersed in different part of mainland India; and the Chakma refugees are

largely concentrated in the North-Eastern part of India.

The inevitable consequences of such refugees flows particularly in large number and involving violence in one form or the other has created problem between the states (countries) that generates such flows or receive them – China, Bangladesh and India. With the socio-cultural and political turmoil in the region, and also elsewhere in the world, critical analysis and understanding of the problems of Chakma and Tibetan refugees is important for finding durable solutions.

This study focuses on the geographical aspects of resettlement pattern of Chakma and Tibetan refugees in India. The main objective is to examine the regional distribution of these refugees in India and analyze the economic, environmental and socio-cultural factors that have influenced its evolution over time. After a review of theoretical constructs pertinent to immigrant settlement, an outline of the specific forces of dispersal and communication thought to be responsible for the changes in refugee settlement pattern are being highlighted. Finally, a focus on the series of cross-sectional analysis of primary and secondary refugee migration to reveal possible arial characteristic that attract or repel refugees.

The main concern is the process of refugee migrations within the host country rather than the genesis of refugee movements themselves. The emphasis is on macro-level features of refugees migration system rather than on characteristics or motivation of individual refugees. The work is an attempt to understand some of the regional demographic implication of international refugee movements, especially in the case of the host country.

**Literature Reviews**

The literature review is an efforts to find out what type of literature are
available, analyzed their similarities and differences from each other in method and focuses and finally to develop a meaningful perspective on the subject.

A survey on the available materials showed some important facts. Numerous materials are available on the concept, causes, legal views and institutional arrangements in the study of refugees. On the study of refugees migration, the United Nations and its various agencies like UNHCR, Commission reports (by Governments and Non-Governmental Organization) are important. Many scholars have undertaken research on the problem, process, nature and types of migration. Their works and findings are important.

The United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Labour Organization, (ILO) are engaged in bringing out problems faced by the displaced people and refugees all over the world. For refugee movements, various Human Rights Organizations viz., Amnesty International, Anti-Slavery Society, Survival International, etc., regularly highlights the refugee problems and human rights abuses in different parts of the world.

For South Asian region, materials on refugee movements are available in different form, highlighting different aspects. However, no comparative study has been made on any refugees in South Asia and in India. Studies of refugees in South Asia and India are done mainly on specific refugee movements, but a study on refugee and nation-states relationship is lacking. It is, therefore, important to study the refugee and the nation-states relationship on the line of the problem of nation-states and its responsibility to her ‘victim groups’ or refugees.

Some important studies which provides an insight into the concept of refugees migration and international responses are as follows:
United Nations, International conference on population (1984)³ contributed to great deals in the study of different forms of migration. It was the proceeding of the Expert Group on Population distribution, migration and development highlighting the distribution, migration and development especially stressing the problems of world-wide migrations. The theme of the study includes, the international migration implication for development policies; general objectives of National and International policy. The worldwide situation and problems of undocumented migration are reviewed. Brain-drain, refugees migrations and implementation of the population plan of Action; supplemented by relevant data for each forms of migrations.

United Nations, world population trends and policies (1989)⁴ gave the major flow in the international scale. Here voluntary and forced migrations are discussed. The migration movement in broad term are generally from the economically less advanced countries. The undocumented or illegal migrations may occur without the approval of either the sending or the receiving countries. And refugee movements may be strictly control by the potential receiving countries. The affects of migration on the receiving countries and its diversity are given in detailed.

Harpal Kaur, (1981)⁵ brings out the concept of refugees and various acts and recommendation at the International level. With regards to the rights and legal status of refugees, the 1951 conventions relating to the status of refugees and the 1967 protocol relating to the status of refugees are important. Another general multilateral and regional treaty concerning refugees are also discussed.

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And Basic International Legal Documents on Refugees, (1999)\textsuperscript{6} published by UNHCR, New Delhi is important documents in which all UN documents on refugees and regional conventions on refugees are compiled. And some pertinent Executive Committee conclusions are included.

B.S. Chimni, (1998)\textsuperscript{7} argued that the International Legal Regime for the protection of refugees is constituted by a complex network of national and international laws which operate in conjunction. The present article offers a conspectus on international (as opposed to national laws) which quorum the world of refugees.

The United Nation’s High Commissioner for Refugees an apex world body which mandate have seen for the protection and solution of refugees’ problem world over. It has given many valuable reports, suggestions on world refugee problems, “The State of the World’s Refugees: A Humanitarian Agenda”, (1998)\textsuperscript{8} is one of recent one. This report profiles the plight of approximately 22 million people who have been uprooted from their home across the world. It covers a wide spectrum of issues – refugees, internally displaced persons and stateless peoples. It not only bring out the dilemma of the agency regarding the protection of refugees, but also illustrates why the notion of humanitarian assistance today has precedence over protection of refugees.

It is important to note that none of the South Asian countries are signatories of any Refugees Convention. B.S. Chimni, (1994)\textsuperscript{9} gave a brief review or the reasons why India is not a member to the 1951 Convention and 1967 protocol relating to the status of refugees. His argument was that there are

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{6} UNHCR. Basic International Legal Documents of Refugees. 1999, New Delhi: UNCHR: Third Edition.
  \item \textsuperscript{7} B.S Chimni ,1998, “Refugees in International Law”, Seminar, 463, March.
\end{itemize}
complex historical and political reasons peculiar to the region, which account for this non-participation.

Graeme Hugo, (1990)\textsuperscript{10} paper seeks to present a conceptualization and definition of different type of refugee and disaster affected migrations in all types of movement with specific refugee to Asia and an attempt is also made to establish the significant similarities and difference between refugee and disaster affected migrations (such as caused by government initiated projects), as well as other forms of migration.

Mel Gurtov, (1991)\textsuperscript{11} essay presents a global refugee crisis. Emphasis is placed on the structural roots of the crisis in different forms of violence: inter-and intrastate conflict and underdevelopment. Macro and micro level steps to diminish the violence should emphasize expanding recourse to international law and organizations, promoting human rights, and giving the highest priorities to environmental protection and social justice in development assistance to refugees and the Third World States from which most of them have faced.

In regard to the Asia Continent study on refugees status, Vitit Muntarbhorn, (1992)\textsuperscript{12} examines some of the underlying issues concerning the status of refugees in Asia. The study examines law and policy issues affecting refugee movements in Asia. The performance of three Asian countries which have acceded to the 1951 UN Refugee combination and its 1967 Protocol is assessed; namely China, Japan and Philippines. Five other countries which have not acceded to these instruments are then analyzed; namely, Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The study covers the situation until the beginning of 1991.


Before giving into South Asia region and case study on refugees in the region, let us examine what material are available on the relationship between geography and refugees and their study.

Richard Black, (1991)\textsuperscript{13} reviewed the geographical contribution to the growing field of refugee studies. In his review he found that despite the fragmentary nature of existing research, a number of fruitful areas for future study are identified. To quote “An analysis of the current literature also reveals a continuing and basic”.

Martin S. Kenzer, (1991)\textsuperscript{14} brings out why after years of neglect, the plight of the refugees have been documented for a variety of reason, from numerous perspectives, by a wide spectrum of academic disciplines and special interest groups. But the paper mentioned that, “Geographers have devoted very little effort and energy to refugees issues, even though they have contributed admirably to the teaching of population Geography and related topics. This is surprising, since medical, regional, social, political, cultural, and population geographers (among others) all deal with themes and concepts that readily lend themselves to the geographic dimensions of refugees”, (1991:189). “Geographer clearly have the capacity to augment current research into the analysis of refugee movements, but few have thus far taken the time to do so. As the global political picture changes, refugees are rapidly becoming a common feature on the social landscape a numerous countries world wide, and they are almost certain to become an increasingly significant factor as the 1990s unfold”, (1991:190).

Ambiguity in much geographical writing on refugees, whereby exceptional status is often assigned to this type of migration. Existing work tend to view refugees flows separately as temporary, unique, one-off-event


(Kliot, 19870, and where comparisons have been drawn with other migratory flows, the distinctiveness of refugees has been emphasized, (Desbarats, 1985 a, Wood, 1989 a)” (1991: 281). In contrast, this paper argues that in context of rapidly growing interests amongst social scientists in the study of refugees, and the development of a specific field of refugee studies, “geographers must draw links between this field and their own long standing interests in issues such as migrations, ‘natural’ and other disasters, and the politics of conflicts which are often the immediate cause of refugee flows” (1991: 281).

Richard Black and Vaughan Robinson, eds., (1993)\(^{15}\) an edited book is another important study which link the discipline of geography and refugees. The book is intended to build on the growing literature on refugee studies. It aims to consider the contribution of the discipline of geographical work on refugees, and through discussion of substantive issues concerning the relationship between the two fields.

John R. Rogge, (1985)\(^{16}\) studied the refugee problem in Sudan’s within the discipline of geography. The scale and diversity of Sudan’s refugee experience are great: the time over which Sudan has had to be host to refugee is long. Sudan’s management of its refugees through resettlement in the rural and urban settlements is discussed in details, which is the first-asylum country.

Richard C. Jones, 1989\(^{17}\), studies the causes of Salvadoran migration to the United States which are conflict related, but controversy continues over whether the immediate motivations are political or economic.

Jacqueline Desbarats, (1985)\(^{18}\) studied the South East Asia refugees in US, has been a dramatic increase and these refugees are becoming increasingly


concentrated in a small number of western states. The distribution pattern is the result of the refugees' high interstate mobility and of the family re-unification criterion used to admit and resettle refugees. This unplanned spatial clustering of the refugee population calls into question the effectiveness and the desirability of the original dispersal policy.

Mark Leopold, (1992)\textsuperscript{19} looked at the social and cultural impact of forced migration. He examines the often painful and difficult situations of adjustment in term enlightening refugee and development policy, which focus more on the political issues than on the cultural and human side. He examines both the plight of the "refugees" or "forced migrants", and the receiving communities looking at their cultural adoption. Leopold argues that policy must take into account the rich diversity of the past experience of "forced migration" if we all are to adapt successively to the no doubt increasing level "forced migration" we face ahead.

William B. Wood, (1984)\textsuperscript{20} presented the case of the Third-Work asylum-seekers of international migrants who are caught up in an ever-tightening cycle of restrictions on their entry into Western European and North American Countries and on government protection of them once they have gained entrance. The focus here is on migration 'pull' factors at potential destinations and 'intervening obstacle' between international destinations. The current conflicts among asylum seekers, national asylum political and attempts at international cooperation in managing migration streams and resettlement may greatly effort generations of asylum seekers and refugees.

A perspective regarding ethnicity and nation-building processes in South Asia and its various socio-political implications are studied by many scholars. These processes generated in many occasions refugees in the region.

Myron Weiner, (1978)\textsuperscript{21} throws light on the typical problems faced by the region, South Asia, especially in relation to ethnic conflicts in India.

Urmilla Phadnis... et al, (1986)\textsuperscript{22} and by the same author, (1990)\textsuperscript{23} examined the challenges faced by the South Asian Countries, where the region has so many religious and ethnic groups.

Paul R. Brass, (1991)\textsuperscript{24} presented a theory concerning the origins of ethnic identity and modern nationalism. He based his theory on the focal argument: one that ethnicity and nationalism are not ‘givens’ but are social and political construction, and two that ethnicity and nationalism are modern phenomena ‘inseparably connected’ with the activities of the modern centralizing state.

Lok Raj Baral, (1990)\textsuperscript{25} studied the streams of migrations experienced by the South Asian nations and these are not new to the region. However, traditional migratory streams are now arousing the apprehensions of peoples, promoting them to oppose the influx of migrants into their areas. The study focuses on various aspects of inter-state migrations in South Asia, especially their impact on maintenance of internal politico-social equation and on aggravation of ethnic tension.

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Ethnicity and Nation Building in South Asia}, New Delhi: Sages Publications
Janet Leatherby, (1989)\textsuperscript{26} says that, despite the difficulty in establishing accurate statistic of refugees and other forced migrations, the number of refugees worldwide is increasing dramatically by at least one million per year.

Myron Weiner, (1994)\textsuperscript{27} identifies the various types of population movements across boundaries in South Asia, the internal social and political response to these flows, the impact of these flows on relations between the states and the ways in which the states have sought to deter unwanted flows when they were unable to control their borders.

Tapan K. Bose and Rita Manchanda, (1997)\textsuperscript{28} is an edited collection. The papers by Barun De, Tapan Bose, Ranbir Samaddar and Ravi Nair provide a useful overview to the refugees’ situation in the region. The primary focus remain on the legal regimen governing refugees and their rights, all the contributors emphasize both the human dimension of the problem as also the need to go beyond nation-state fetishism. As Barun De points out, much of this problem has been created by the artificial drawing up of stresses the sustainability of drawing distinction between economic and socio-political flows, between migratory and refugees status.

S.D. Muni and Lok Raj Baral, eds., (1996)\textsuperscript{29} is an edited book. The main concern of all the contributors is the causes, nature and volume of refugees in the South Asian region. The study was an attempt to relate refugee’s flows with security concern in general and in the context of South Asia in particular.

\textsuperscript{27} Myron Weiner, 1994, “Rejected Peoples and Unwanted Migrants in South Asia”, \textit{Economic and Political Weekly}, 21 August, pp.1371-79.
Tibetan Refugees

The Presence of Tibet (1963) by Lang Sims Lois in perhaps the first work over done on the Tibetan refugees in India, if not outside Tibet as such. This work is concerned with problems faced by Tibetan refugees in bringing about a viable relationship between their ancient culture and religious and modern world. Tibetans in India 1968) by Germaine Krull also deals with the preservation of the cultural treasure brought from Tibet.

The Tibetan Refugee Problem is a typescript by Ralph V. Hetzel. This is a report submitted in 1968 on the problems faced by Tibetan refugees in their initial stay in India. A more detailed account of the same and the ways they are being tackled are found in Tibetans in Exile (1959-1980), 1981, which is compiled, edited and published by the information office of His Holiness the Dalai Lama at Dharamsala.

Tibetan Refugee Community: Integrated Development Plan-I 1990-95 and Plan II 1999-2000 published by Planning Council, Central Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 1990 and 1994 respectively gave the settlements of Tibetan refugees in India and other countries and their population. And they are important documents for economic planning and overall development for refugee communities.

Melvyn C. Goldstein, (1978), claims that “the competition for resources that exists among these refugee populations, and between them and the Indian population, is one of the critical factors underlying the development of ethnic boundaries now operative both within and outside of the Tibetan community”.

The other important work published in the same year, Tibetan in India: A Case Study of Mundgod Tibetans (1981) by T.C. Palakshappa. It looks at the adjustment patterns of Tibetans in Mundgod to the Socio-Cultural and physical conditions prevalent in the local area (1978: 7). It is based on a survey of 869 families, one of the largest surveys ever done on them.

Tibetan Refugees in Orissa: An Anthropogenetic Study (1980) is also interesting. It contains important information about the morphological and genetic aspects of the Tibetan populations settled in the Chandragiri hill areas of Ganjam district, Orissa.

Another study on them is Survival of Refugee Culture: The Long Term Gift Exchange between Tibetan Refugee and Donors in India, by Dorsh Morie Devol,(1983) is a Ph.D., thesis paper submitted to the University of Berkely in 1983. It asserts that, the key to understanding recipients of and, such as the Tibetan refugees, lies not solely in specific cultural information about the group or knowledge about characteristics generally applied to refugee groups, but rather in an analysis of their associations with donors over the gift of aid.

Margaret Nowak, (1984) ‘Tibetan Refugees: Youth and the New Generation of Meaning’, is a pleasant turn the course of Tibetan studies. It makes use of a symbolic anthropology to analyse how the Tibetan youths in exile have struggled to find new meaning in India by adopting new symbols or reinterpretting old ones. In the same year a Tibetan youth, Tsering Togyal Tsamdha (1984), completes his post graduate dissertation paper entitled “Tibetan Refugees Settlement in Orissa: An Assessment by Planning Perspective” which he submits to the School of planning, Centre for Environmental Planning and Technology (CEPT), Ahmedabad. He brings out

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the differences between settlement in North and South India very clearly as an insider could. Franz Michael, (1985) studied the cultures of Tibetans in India. It is an interesting writing outlining the secrets of the survivals of Tibetan culture; he gives a major credit to the Dalai Lama himself.

Girija Saklani, (1984) studied the uprooted Tibetans in India. This may be mentioned as one of the most exhaustive work done by an Indian sociologist on the subject. It discusses change in the traditional Tibetan society along with its present rehabilitation problems of the refugees. The attempts here are to make a diachronic study with the help of different methods of data collection. The regions covered are Dharamasala, Clement town and Delhi, with a total of 265 sample households.

Other important work on an account on the perspective of sociological life and problems on Tibetan refugees in India is evaluated by Uma Kant Awashti, (1978) In Search of a Home; An Exploratory Sociological Study of Tibetan Refugees in India. And a socio-cultural approach to the Tibetan refugees in the settlement areas in India is studied by A.B. Mukherji,(1991) in “A Cultural Ecological Appraisal of Refugee Resettlement in Independent India”.

The Tibetan refugees and the international responses are study by, Iabella Khating, (1977) in “Tibetan Refugees and the United Nations”. Here, the author traced and examined the role of international community, especially UNHCR in helping Tibetan refugees in India and Nepal. And the role of India

36 Margaret Nowak, 1984, Tibetan Refugees: Youth And the New Generation of Meaning.
38 Girija Saklani, 1984, The Uprooted Tibetans in India, New Delhi: Cosmo Publications.
in United Nations on questions of Tibet is examined by Rashmi Bhatnagar, (1983)\textsuperscript{42} in “Question of Tibet in United Nations with Reference to India’s Role”.

Different scholars study the Tibetan issue in the Foreign Policy of India. Alastair Lamb, (1986)\textsuperscript{43} in “British India and Tibet 1766-1910”, Suchita Ghosh, (1977)\textsuperscript{44} in “Tibet in Sino-Indian Relationship 1899-1914”, Sanjaya Katiha, (1989)\textsuperscript{45} “India’s Tibet Policy”, and other important books and article are quoted and included in the chapters and in the bibliography.

The Chakmas

R.H. Sneyd Hutchinson, (1978)\textsuperscript{46} “Chittagong Hill Tracts”, first published in 1909 is an important historical account on the people of the Chittagong Hills Tracts. The book gave on socio-political account before the British came in contact with the Hill Tracts and how an administrative arrangement was made which is till recent year an important political issue between the Bangladesh government and the Hill people.

The Chakma and their historical account are given in S.P. Talukdar,(1988)\textsuperscript{47} The Chakmas: Life and Struggles, Delhi: Gian Publishing Association; by the same author,(1994)\textsuperscript{48} Chakma: The Embattled Tribe, New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House. Talukdar in his two books described how the Chakmas in the CHT organized themselves and lived without much interference from ‘outsiders’. He gave in detail the socio-cultural size of the

\textsuperscript{44} Suchita Ghosh, 1977, Tibet in Sino-Indian Relationship 1899-1914, New Delhi: Sterling Publication
Chakmas in the Hill Tracks. He also described how the political change in South Asia region after the colonial period also affected the life of Chakmas. And how under different political changes, first under Pakistan and in 1971, under Bangladesh the Hill Tracts also undergo politico-social changes. The crisis in the Hill and the problem of Chakma are studied in detail.

Spotlight: Regional Affairs, Islamabad, (1987) this issue is devoted in bringing out the Chakma problem in the Hill Tracts. The Chakma problems in the Hills Tracts are discussed, which according to this started from the Bangladesh policies and programmes and Indo-Bangladesh relation, which is partially correct.


There are a number of reports an account of killing, torture, rape, arson, forced relocation and cultural oppression of the hill peoples of the Chittagong Hill Tracts in Bangladesh. This accounts are reports and published by Amnesty International, Anti-Slavery International, the Organizing Committee Chittagong Hill Tracts Campaign (Netherlands), Survival International, National and International Newspapers etc. An attempt was made in he Report of the Chittagong Hill Tracts Commission, May 1991 investigated an alleged violation on human rights in the Chittagong Hill Tracts.

My M.Phil Dissertation, (1995) on “Trans-border Migration and Political Conflicts: A Case Study of Chakmas”, was an attempt to analyse and

bring out what are the causes of trans-border crossing in the context of Chakma. They come to India due to various hostile conditions in their homeland, CHT, Bangladesh and a study was made on its political implications for the host country and the country of origin.

There are articles and materials on Tibetans and Chakmas in different forms, like newspaper reports, magazines, pamphlets, etc., discussing and reporting on the problem and effects faced by the Tibetans and Chakmas refugees, which are included in the bibliography.

The present study of refugee migration and their implications for the region’s states in the context of Tibetan and Chakma depends on documents, new reports, analytical essays, interviews and official and unofficial documents. However, there is a dearth of statistical data

Objective and Hypothesis

The basic objectives of the present study are:

1. To analyse and examine the nature of causes of emergence of refugee problems and to examine the volume, direction and spatial location of refugees, and the nature of ethnic conflicts arising out of and causing political instability the South Asia a with special reference to India, China and Bangladesh in the context of Tibetans and Chakmas.

2. To understand the working of the principle of distance decay to explain the volume and direction of the refugee settlement.

3. To examine the emerging conflicts and policies over the issues of Tibetan and Chakma refugees and growing concern and search for possible solution.
The present study is important to formulated and test a couple hypothesis, e.g.,

(a) the spatial framework based on the basic principle of distance decay offer a better understanding of the seriousness of the refugee problem within the sub-continental framework;

(b) there is an intimate relationship between the spatial characteristic of refugees and the nature of political consequences within the region; and

(c) the refugee problem specially concerning the Chakmas is the out come of the disturbed equilibrium of socio-cultural coexistence in the eastern part of the sub-continent, where as the Tibetan case is extraneous in character and has led to new frame of coexistence in the sub-continent.

**Data Base and Methodology**

The methodology followed has been reviewing the existing literature, book, journals, newspapers, articles, government documents and reports, on refugees in general and South Asian region in particular. Latest data available on the refugees and important other materials are collected and in corporate whenever necessary. Not much comprehensive work on the geographical aspects and political influences had been done. So, discussion with officials, resource persons, having direct knowledge of the problems and refugee themselves helped me to a great extent. The essential framework is the out come of long and tedious field work base on interviews, discussions and dialogue directly with the effected persons as well as the officers managing the settlement of these refugees.