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Title: Bengali Nationalism, Citizenship, and Intergenerational Strategies of Biharis in Bangladesh

Abstract:

This thesis investigates how the Bihari ethno-lingual minorities in Bangladesh realise their formal citizenship rights in their daily contestation over urban public space. On May 18, 2008, the historic ruling by the Supreme Court of Bangladesh accepted them as Urdu-speaking Bangladeshi citizens. Bringing together theoretical discourses on the *right to the city*, *ethnocracy*, marginality, informality, and insurgency, this research adopts a critical paradigm toward the socially constructed meaning of reality around urban space and place. It undertakes a critical qualitative study on the Bihari dwellers in Khulna, an east-southern city of Bangladesh, through a combination of visual and verbal data collection methods of participatory photography, in-depth interviews, and group discussions. Through this research, I aim to reveal Biharis's everyday experiences and practices as they negotiate their citizenship rights within the context of urban spaces and places. The research addresses the constraints to citizenship Biharis encounter, their negotiation of those constraints, and the insurgent practices they mobilise in (re)-making the right to an inclusive multi-ethnic city.

