

## Urban Site and Changing categories of Migrants

Migration is as old as our civilization; a byproduct of colonialism and capitalism. Earlier in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, economic form of migration was pervasive and people came to dazzling cities to meet their livelihood needs. Though, these migrants remain vulnerable but they continuously provided services to the cities. And, unlike the early migration, nowadays migrations are more fluid marked by turbulence and change and thus undertook multiple directions.

Presently, people do migrate in situations arises out of conflict and many times the terminology 'migration' got perplexed with 'dislocation', 'displacement' and other synonyms given by the urbanist. In the British India, partition is one such event which leads to massive mass movement across the eastern border. Many historians have successfully captured the anguish and brutality of that mass movement. During that period, a large number of poor Muslims were left behind in Delhi. Refugee camps were spread all across Delhi and with time they started to settle themselves in Walled city and contiguous areas of old Delhi, in Jamia Nagar and contiguous South Delhi localities. There are several smaller pockets in areas such as Nizamuddin, Hauz Rani, Uttam Nagar, Inderlok and Mehrauli. Also, there are a few elite gated housing societies such as Taj Enclave, Abul Fazal Apartments, Zakir Bagh.

At the same time, being the metropolis and capital of India, Delhi remained in the centre due to its spatial, temporal and political dimensions. Episodes like the period of Emergency, in 1975 were crucial in the sense that many parts of the walled city were bulldozed after forced evictions of mostly Muslim residents. Post-Emergency Muslim population was living scattered in pockets in and around Old Delhi, Okhla, Basti Hazrat Nizamuddin, Mehrauli and Seelampur. Later, in 1990, widespread Hindu right-wing mobilization via the *Rath Yatra* led by LK Advani, leader of Hindu Nationalist party, BJP as part of Ramjanmbhoomi Movement left a trail of anti-Muslim riots and massacres in many pockets of Muslim community in Delhi. The pockets of Muslim inhabitants started to begin homogenized and got consolidated after each incidence of communal riots especially the post Babri Masjid demolition riots in 1992 and Gujarat pogrom in 2002.

In this paper, I am trying to highlight the situation of Muslim communities living in Seelampur. Seelampur is a resettlement colony of Muslims evicted during Emergency from Yamuna Bazar, Dilli Gate, Turkman Gate, Daryaganj and Ballimaran areas of old city and various other parts of the city (Tarlo 2003) .

Under the regime of Pt. Nehru, Delhi was going through a massive developmental drive. In 1960s several migrant communities residing near Lal Quila, RajGhat were forced to evacuate and they were resettled in Seelampur. Before the emergency these settlements have mixed population of Hindus and Muslims whereby they are living peacefully. The episode of emergency and other activities lead by Hindutva group made Seelampur a Muslim dominated community; Hindus of the community started relocating themselves in other sites while Muslims

from several other regions started reconstituting themselves in Seelampur. This ongoing process of relocation and reconstitution amongst the community has a tremendous impact on their lived reality.

While looking critically, we will find that city has grown enormously but the identity of Muslim always remains a matter of deep concern for state as well as for other groups like RSS, VHP. These groups gave more emphasis on the *belonging identity* (caste, religion), which has a homogenizing impact and increased mistrust and social remoteness between the two communities.

Further, amongst the minority community too the position of women is sabotaged by the pillar of patriarchy. The sexuality of women has travelled tremendously; in late 19<sup>th</sup> century it was viewed as symbolic economies involving the nation while during the nationalist movement women is frequently seen as an 'iconic representation' of cultural and/or ethnic-national identity. These constitute *cultural violence* against the women which has taken a legitimized route via mediums like religion, ideology, language and art, empirical science and formal science. Galtung (1966) argued that "*conflict is much more than what meets the naked eye as 'trouble,' direct violence. There is also the violence frozen into structures, and the culture that legitimizes violence*" and thus "*cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right - or at least not wrong*".

With this background, the paper aims to understand the journey of women from their 'displaced' or 'migrant' categories to a new category of being 'ghettos' in an urban area and their continuum struggle for their livelihood.

### **Research Questions**

- What conditions/situations prompt women/ family to move in Seelampur.
- Does episodes like emergency of 1975, Babri Masjid Demolition 1992 has impacted the life of community. If yes, in which terms. ( to know the nature of violence they faced and its impact or how they are negotiating with it).
- Does there is any change in their livelihood pattern in past 30 years? Explain. (Livelihood pattern means the nature of job; concept of public/ private space for women; to draw their recourse map and see the contraction / expansion in which space...)