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BORDER MANAGEMENT IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

After independence, India adopted the policy of peaceful settlement of all border related issues and entering into peace and friendship or boundary agreements with neighbouring countries. Guarding of borders appears to have received little attention due to resource constraints and thinking that the borders were generally secure. Initially the responsibility of guarding the borders was that of State Armed Police Forces.

***KEYWORDS**: **Border Management, Armed Police Forces, Neighbouring Countries, Guarding Forces**.*

Introduction

Raising of Border Guarding Forces

The 1962 conflict brought into sharp focus the politico-strategic threat and pressure that China could exert on India and compelled the Indian national security apparatus to carry out dispassionate appraisal of larger national perspectives and compulsions. Policy makers realised the necessity of improving and revitalising the defence preparedness of the country and strengthening its border guarding mechanism. Consequently, a force raised in 1954 to provide protection to the check posts on the Indo-Tibetan border subsequent to Indo- China trade agreement was expanded to operate as a guerrilla force and also entrusted responsibility to guard North- Western and Central sectors of the border with China.

Responsibility of guarding India's borders with Pakistan remained with the State Armed police till 1965. Need to deploy a specialized border guarding force even during peace time was felt after April 1965 misadventure by Pakistan in the Kutch area.

A thorough review of the security of borders with Pakistan was ordered by then Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri. A study group consisting of Army Chief General J N Choudhary and K F Rustomji recommended raising of a centrally controlled Border Security Force to guard Indo- Pak borders. The Committee observed that, "The recent happenings along the Kutch-Pakistan border and in fact, continuous incidents along the Sino-Indo-Pak border as a whole, bring into prominence the whole question of how such a border should be looked after, in peace, in Cold War and when threat of Cold

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War hots up." Thus, the Border Security Force came to be raised and deployed along the International Border (IB) with Pakistan (Now Pakistan on the west and Bangladesh on the East). Some units of newly raised force were also deployed along Line of Control (LoC) in Kashmir.

The study group observed that border guarding was adversely effected because the State armed Police Forces were unable to provide the standard of security expected of them because of following reasons: -

- **Resources -** The states did not have adequate number of units to provide the desired standard of security. Even the units deployed on the border were often thinned out for dealing with law and order situations. The states also lacked resources in terms of equipping these units to the desired level.
- **Training -** The state armed police were basically designed to handle law and order situation and their training was oriented accordingly. The duties on border required greater element of militarisation essential to enable them to handle minor skirmishes along borders and to supplement the war efforts of defence forces in case required. The states did not have the wherewithal to train them in this manner.
- **Uniformity -** The State armed police forces of different states differed in their organisation, equipment and training methodology. Therefore, they could not be expected to function in a uniform manner which was particularly important when operating to assist the war efforts of defence forces. The aspect of uniformity in dealing with the counterpart was also an important consideration for raising a centrally controlled force.
- **Integration -** Lack of uniformity and integration of different State Forces deployed along the border had obvious disadvantages as discussed above. It was therefore essential to integrate all the forces responsible for guarding borders at that time into a single centrally controlled force.

Above factors coupled with effects of developmental activities and associated social changes compelled strategists to focus on improving security environment along the borders of the country. Need for effective border guarding during peace coupled with requirement of proper integration with Defence forces in war effort was an important consideration for raising centrally controlled BSF.

Raised on 1st Dec 1965, the BSF was deployed along Indo- Pak Borders (now Indo-Pak on the west and Indo-Bangladesh on the east). Few units of the force were also deployed along the Line of Control in J&K under the operational control of Army.

Till about late eighties, the borders were sans any obstacle and guarding them was almost totally man power oriented with little or no technical support. Even manpower deployed was limited due to limited strength of the force. The militancy in Punjab and Kashmir in eighties and nineties, compelled the policy makers to rethink the strategy for guarding borders specifically in context of Indo-Pak borders because entire logistic support to militants came from across the border from Pakistan.

A three pronged strategy was adopted to tackle the problem. Firstly, many more units of BSF were raised to enhance the troop density. Secondly, Modern technological devices were inducted to assist the troops in observation and detection of infiltrators. Thirdly, a decision was taken to fence the borders with Pakistan to prevent and/or channelise militants/infiltrators. The fence proved very effective in cutting of logistics and finances to the militants. The fence was slowly extended to cover the entire western borders and later along the Borders with Bangladesh. The fence is being continuously strengthened with measures like flood lighting, installing early warning devices and also equipping the troops with better surveillance devices.

Next major overhaul of border management strategies took place after the Kargil conflict. Review of the security situation along borders once again brought into focus the importance of proper coordination of border management efforts amongst different agencies. It was realised that the Border Management is not a single agency function and all the stakeholders had to work in coordination with each other to ensure wellbeing of the border population.

The "Group of Ministers" set up in wake of the Kargil war made several important recommendations to improve management of borders of India.

One recommendation related to desirability of setting up of a Department of Border Management within the MHA. The department is responsible for coordination of all activities related to borders. A Land Ports authority was set up in 2006 with mission to build land ports on India's borders in order to provide secure, seamless and efficient systems for cargo and passenger movement, to reduce dwell time and trade transaction costs, to promote regional trade and people-to-people contact and endeavor to imbibe the best international practices.

Another important recommendation was "One Border One Force" which entailed that the responsibility of guarding different borders be entrusted to different forces. Thus while BSF continued to be responsible for Indo-Pakistan and Indo-Bangladesh Borders and ITBP for India-China border, they recommended raising new forces for guarding Indo-Nepal, Indo-Bhutan and Indo-Myanmar border.

Thus, "Special Service Bureau" which was raised in 1963 in the aftermath of the India - China war, with the objective of achieving 'Total security preparedness' in the remote border areas and to perform 'stay-behind' role in the event of a war was converted into a combatised border guarding force in June 2001 with the responsibility of guarding India-Nepal and India-Bhutan borders. The force was named "Shashastra Seema Bal". The responsibility of guarding Indo- Myanmar border was entrusted to Assam Rifles.

The GOM also introduced the concept of "Lead Intelligence Agency" which implied entrusting the responsibility of coordinating efforts of different Intelligence agencies to the border guarding forces for respective borders under their responsibility.

The committee placed a lot of emphasis on developing infrastructure in border area, keeping the importance of ensuring wellbeing and necessity of integrating border population with rest of the country. Lot of emphasis was therefore placed on implementation of "Border Area development programme" whose aim was to develop infrastructure and enhance employment opportunities in border areas. Committee also recommended greater involvement of Border Guarding Forces in the planning and implementation of this program.

Thus the scope of Border management is much wider than that of border guarding and includes several stakeholders towards achieving singular aim of integration of border and border population with the main stream.

Border guarding systems along India- Pakistan border are Militaristic in nature and designed to work as barriers. Regular Army is deployed the Line of Control in classic defensive role on Forward Defended Localities (FDLs). BSF is deployed on LC under Army operational control. The militaristic methodology is necessitated because the infiltrators equipped with lethal weapons are actively aided by Pakistani forces with cover fire. The infiltrators themselves react aggressively on being intercepted. The contact between counterparts is extremely limited.

On the international borders in Jammu, Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat the BSF operates by establishing "Border Out Posts (BOP)" for conducting border domination operations. Normal border guarding operations like "Patrolling", "Observation Posts" are carried out during day, besides "Patrolling" and "Ambushes" during night. "Kissan guards" are deployed in area ahead of fence for surveillance and protection of farmers working in their fields.

BSF also carries out certain special operations to dominate the area ahead of the fence at night, to prevent trans-border criminals and infiltrators from contacting and breaching the fence. The smugglers often adopt conceal and clear methodology that involves hiding the contraband in area ahead of the fence to be cleared by their accomplices and brought to own side by hiding it in their tractors, bullock carts and other implements. Frequent search operations are carried out by BSF to prevent this from happening. Implements and personnel are also searched thoroughly at the fence gates when going out or coming, in order to prevent contraband from crossing over.

Induction of women constabulary in BSF has resolved the problem of search of women folk going across the fence for work to a great extent. Proper gate management during day time is crucial to ensuring that contraband doesn't cross over to own side of the fence. This also is important for maintaining cordial relations with border population.

The riverine border in Sir Creek area south of Gujarat is dominated by Water wing of BSF which has evolved its own domination drills. Similar drills are adopted for domination of riverine borders in the Bay of Bengal, Brahmaputra river and other smaller stretches.

General nature of border guarding along India-Bangladesh border is similar to that on west however, these are less militaristic due to friendly relations with Bangladesh and high density of population residing very close to borders.

Cattle smuggling is cause of many causalities on borders often leading to diplomatic furore. In view of this the BSF has adopted a "less lethal strategy" which implies use of less lethal weapons like "Pump action Guns", "Stun Grenades" and "Chilly Grenades" etc. This has gone a long way in reducing causalities and ensuring better relations with counterpart.

Border Guarding – Legal Provision

The Border Guarding Forces while performing their role of preventing border crimes have to operate in accordance with the procedures laid down by Law. For example, Section 139 of the BSF Act 1968 provides for conferment of powers and duties on the members of BSF under various Central and State Acts. These legal powers have been conferred under various Acts by way of several notifications issued by the central and State Governments. The powers are mainly confined to the arrest, search and seizure and as such these are justiciable and to be exercised judiciously. Similar powers have been delegated to other border guarding forces.

The powers conferred include Police powers under *CrPC1974* for search and seizure in specified areas Viz. These powers can be exercised in whole of the States of Manipur Tripura, Meghalaya, Mizoram, and Nagaland and area within the belt of eighty kilometres from borders in the state of Gujarat, fifty kilometres from borders in the state of Rajasthan and fifteen kilometres from the borders in the states of Punjab, West Bengal and Assam.

Such Police powers with consent of State Government are also conferred on members of BSF for entire Union Territory of J&K under the Jammu and Kashmir Code of criminal Procedure 1989.

Powers under *Customs Act, 1962* have been conferred on members of Force according to their rank-viz Commandant and below, Subordinate officers and Under Officers. Some of the powers under Section 105 and 108 of the Customs Act can be exercised by BGF officers only when Customs officer of the rank of Superintendent or above are not posted.

Powers have also been conferred under Section 4 of *Passport Act, 1967*. These powers can be exercised within the local limits as applicable for exercise of Police powers.

BGF personnel are empowered to arrest persons within prescribed limits as applicable for Police powers under provisions of Section 37 of *Narcotics drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985*.

Miscellaneous other powers have also been conferred on members of BSF under the provisions of different State Acts.

Inculcating Sense of Security amongst Border Population

Border community is the most important stake holder on the borders and all other stake holders owe their existence to border population. They have to therefore work towards improving the quality of their life and integration in the main stream. The BGF must therefore work towards improving relations with Border Community.

BGF being deployed on remote borders are the sole visible representative of the Government for the people of border area, whom they can approach in times of need. Expectation that they can

depend on BGF for help is therefore natural. BGF have been trying to live up-to the expectations through their deeds during normal times and also during times of natural calamities like floods, earthquakes etc. However, scope for improvement always remains.

The task of preventing smuggling and trans-border crimes, often brings BGF into conflict with border population, many of whom get involved in trans-border crimes in absence of any meaningful economic activity or employment opportunities in the border area. Petty smuggling therefore is a way of life in many bordering villages, especially on the Eastern Borders. Interventions by the BGF to control these crimes are looked upon as a deliberate interference in the means of livelihood for the local population. Thus the relations of BGF with border community are generally adversarial.

It is therefore essential that BGF should institutionalise targeted programs to win over the trust of border population. Identify problems of border population and assisting administration in preparation of policies and programs of action should be viewed as a command function. This will not only earn goodwill, understanding and acceptance of the community but also turn it into a force multiplier and facilitate better border management. It is important to take public attitude and perception into consideration.

BGF-community relationship involves honest efforts by four major players i.e. BSF, local community, state administration and the central Government in their respective areas for deeper understanding and mutual benefit.

Relations with border community will further improve if the Government is able to wean away the population from smuggling and other border crimes. This can happen through developing infrastructure in the border area, providing avenues for employment locally and skill development for taking up gainful employment.

BGF at their own can also initiate certain steps to obviate the feeling of distrust amongst the border population. This can be achieved through small effort like ensuring that troops are aware of local language and culture of the people. Better communication thus facilitated will earn a lot of goodwill and trust for BGF.

Further, there is a need for attitudinal change amongst BGF personnel who tend to treat all border resident as criminals. This hinders contact with local population and prevents mutual trust from developing. This also prevents flow of information related to crimes.

Thirdly, the fence, although has proved a formidable obstacle, also has negatively impacted relations with border population because of restrictions imposed on their movement across the fence. BSF should try and ease these restrictions in consultation with population without compromising with security.

Another major step that BGF need to take in order to improve relations with border population is to dispense with the statistical approach to measure success of operations. The current system blinds the vision and breeds a competition in which public support is sought for marking catches whereas it should, in fact, be used for stemming the menace itself. This is pivotal in turning the orientation of BSF towards community.

Good relations with the public can foster, strengthen and enhance efficiency of the organisation and with enhanced efficiency; the BGF will be in position to fulfill their duties in a more professional manner and show better results.

The locals are even now being gainfully utilised in assisting several border management functions, listed below, especially on Eastern Borders. This is done by way of forming Village Defence committees

- Reporting of any illegal activities and infiltration along the border.
- Keeping allotted areas under surveillance.
- Reporting of any abnormal activity especially in rugged terrain.

- Reporting of subversive activity being carried out by the enemy.
- The local population could also be employed in construction of roads, tracks and maintenance of border fencing thus providing them avenues for income. Both during peace and hostilities, local population can provide invaluable information regarding enemy build-up and activities close to the border areas.
- In riverine areas, fishermen watch groups can be formed. These groups in their normal course of earning a livelihood venture out to the sea up-to quite a distance; also their other routine activity of maintenance of boats, nets and drying of the catch is carried out on the seashore. These fishermen once suitably motivated and imparted certain basic training could well turn out to be the eyes and ears of agencies monitoring the maritime boundaries. This would fill in large gaps existing in the surveillance cover. They would be required to be trained, motivated and provided incentives for engaging in assisting the force in the task of border management. Once this is done, they will prove useful tool to manage localized border problems.
- Provide guides to the Armed Forces whenever required.

The BGF conducts frequent awareness programs to familiarise border population about their tasks, duties, capabilities and constraints. This helps the forces become friends of border population. BGF must however guard against becoming unduly familiar with them. This aspect must be covered adequately in training of border men.

The BGF units before being inducted in an area undergo pre-induction training, wherein every border man learns about the topography, local language, customs and social aspects besides the modus operandi of anti-national elements and border criminals, to a reasonable standard of satisfaction before operational deployment. Sensitivity is created on such issues from constables to officers, to ensure proper and humane responses.

Prolonged stay at one location has to be looked at rationally and a balance created so that the troops and leaders are able to maintain sustained good relations with border population and at the same time obviating any scope of undue familiarity leading to connivance.

It is also essential for BGF to maintain good relations with local administration, Police and other agencies so that minor irritants are resolved. This will also help these agencies to develop an understanding about the capabilities and constraints of BSF thus facilitating a congenial working atmosphere. The role of “Lead Intelligence Agency” assigned to BGF for respective border will further enhance cooperation amongst agencies.

The reach of BGF in far flung areas can be advantageously utilised as a vector to conduit genuine local problems and demands for onward submission. BGF should identify goals for community oriented programs, which could be Identification and development of projects, a permanent communication leading to better understanding, to win public trust, to encourage public co-operation and to develop public understanding of problems faced by the force.

At functional level, it translates into civic action programmes and population control measures. Civic action is a continuous and dynamic process aiming to fulfil local needs and aspiration. Both short term and long term projects are undertaken under this program in consultation with local population and State Government. Funds for Civic action program are generally allocated directly to BSF.

Population control measures in the context of Border Management refer to steps taken to identify infiltrators, criminals etc and isolate them from common people living in border areas. It also implies identification of respectable persons of border community having ability to motivate the population to cooperate with BGF.

The civic action programs undertaken by BGF generally relate to improvement of existing facilities like Schools, Panchayat Houses etc. Provision of machinery like tractors, tube wells, hand pumps, ambulances etc is also done through these programs. Besides above some programs aiming to

develop skills amongst youth at borders to make them employable are also carried out eg Motor Driving, Motor Mechanic, Cutting and stitching, Computer awareness etc.

BGF also undertake some activities on their own without involvement of any funds. These include activities like identification of villagers with physical disabilities and distributing assistive aids through aegis of NGOs and philanthropic societies and helping them out for corrective surgeries.

Activities also include training the youth at border for competitive examinations like the physical and General knowledge tests for selection in armed forces, career counselling for children passing out from schools and deputing own personnel for taking classes in schools on common as well as specialized subjects like computers.

Following additional steps will also help in improving relations with border population – (a) Proper selection and training of border-men, (b) Review of field procedures eg restrictions imposed on border-men on interaction with locals creates a barrier in communication with border population, (c) Training, besides focusing on enhancing operational efficiency must also endeavor to imbibe ethical values and integrity amongst personnel of the force. This should be followed up with strong action against defaulters to send a message across that the force cares about the rights of border population. Training should be oriented to make the border-men people centric so that they are able to empathise with them, (d) Grievances against BSF personnel should be monitored and brought to logical conclusion in appropriate time frame, (e) The BSF must get as near to the population as possible without compromising on official efficiency. There should be frequent formal and informal interactions and joint celebrations of religious festivals, (f) Upon induction in a new area, commanders must gather as much information as possible and study peculiar features relating to various aspects of life like social structure, customs, beliefs, language, religious adaptations, economy, political leanings etc. Analysis of good and bad, rich and poor, friendly and not so friendly, law abiding and law breakers should be carried out, (g) Fraternising through all possible help in emergencies, assisting in developmental work, group activities for youth like sports activities, personal counselling for career choices, education etc and participation in community development activities will go a long way in developing cordial relations and empathy for the force.

A very important aspect of developing good relations with border population is proper behavior and conduct with them. This includes image projection of the force, respecting sentiments of border population, noninterference in their religious affairs, fairness in financial dealings and refraining from forced labour, accepting invitations and attending local functions, noninterference in local disputes or political activity, avoiding damage to the crops or other property and very importantly proper conduct with the women folk.

The expectation of public from BGF is that everyone visiting the BOP especially, those with a grievance must be treated with courtesy besides addressing their grievances promptly. They also expect that the money allotted for projects in their area is well spent in consultation with them and their representatives i.e. Panchayats. These expectations can be met to a large extent through implementation of measures suggested above and through good conduct by BGF personnel.

Border Area Development Program (BADP)

The Govt has started Border Area Development Plans (BADP) with the main objective that this Program will meet the special developmental needs of the people living in remote and inaccessible areas situated near the international border. The Program covers all the bordering states. These are entirely centrally funded programs.

Schemes are required to be identified for funding through these programs. The schemes identified should be designed to take care of the special problems faced by people living in the border blocks, particularly in the rural areas. Schemes for rural and remote areas along the international border are to be given preference over schemes for urban areas. Security related schemes can also be taken up under BADP. However, expenditure on such schemes should not exceed 10% of the total allocation in a particular year.

The BGF in have also been designated as one of the executing agencies under these programs in bordering states. Individual schemes in each State are required to be approved by a Screening Committee chaired by the Chief Secretary of the State. The Screening Committee also includes representatives of the BGF operating on the international border lying within the State besides the representatives of other nominated agencies. BGF can play a major role in identifying the areas and schemes required to be given special attention because of their reach and presence in remote border areas.

The Government of India issues guidelines for BADP from time to time. The latest guidelines were issued in the year 2015 vide Government of India, Ministry of Home Affairs, Department of Border Management, letter No. 12/63/2014-BADP dated 29th June 2015.

The guidelines provide for a list of schemes, which can be taken up under BADP, and also a list of schemes that are not permissible under BADP. Schemes can also be suggested by BGFs concerned and expenditure on the same shall be 10% of the annual allocation made to the State. A list of permissible and non-permissible security related schemes is also provided in the guidelines.

Conduct with Counterpart

Interaction with counterpart border guarding force is an important aspect of border management. This is essential in order to resolve day to day problems within the jurisdiction of local commanders. This also is important in order to provide a safe and secure environment to the border population to enable them to carry out day to day activities without fear.Certain "Ground Rules" have been laid down by the authorities for guidance of Border guarding personnel in their interaction with counterpart.

The first such ground rules for regulation of interaction and conduct of border guarding forces with each other on Indo- Pakistan border were brought into force in 1960 and 1961. These were called (a) Pakistan/Gujarat and Rajasthan (India) Ground Rules, 1960 and (b) Western Pakistan/Punjab (India)Ground rules 1961. These ground rules provide for frequency and methodology of conduct of meetings between border guarding forces at different levels, movement of armed patrols and limit of construction of defences in the vicinity of borders etc.

After the two wars with Pakistan, these Ground rules are no longer formally recognised by the Government of India. However, informally most of the provisions of these are being followed by troops on ground.

On the eastern border with Bangladesh, the first set of Ground Rules that were brought into effect in 1959 were known as East Pakistan Border Ground Rules 1959. These were superseded by Joint India Bangladesh Guidelines for Border Authorities–1975 after independence of Bangladesh and signing of Indo-Bangladesh Boundary Agreement1974.

In 2011, The Director Generals of BSF and BGB (Bangladesh Border Guards) signed a Coordinated Border Management Plan (CBMP) which is an additional set of instructions for the border guarding personnel. It provides for identification and periodic review of crime prone areas. It also provides for Simultaneous Coordinated Patrolling in which the troops of BSF and BGB patrol the border jointly on their respective sides of the borders. It also provides for appointment of Nodal Officers at different levels who would be responsible for resolving issues cropping up at their levels.

The 'Border Guidelines' or 'Ground Rules' can thus be said to be a formalised working arrangement between the two-counterpart border guarding forces to maintain peace and tranquility at the borders formalised through a bilateral agreement.

Border guarding authorities hold regular meetings with each other. These are held biennially between the DsG of respective border guarding forces. Such meetings are also held at prescribed frequency at formation and sector levels. Agenda for such meetings is exchanged in advance.

The border meetings upto the level of Unit Commandant are called Flag meetings and are held whenever need arises. The agenda for such meetings is not pre-decided nor any minutes kept.

A chance meeting between patrols of two border guarding forces also falls in the category of flag meeting and brief of discussions held if any are reported to higher Hqrs.

Another mode of communication with counterpart at local levels is through Lodging of "Protest Notes". These are initiated by respective forces whenever they wish to inform the counterpart about any breach of guidelines, retrieval of persons and animals that may have crossed over inadvertently. Such notes are also sent to convey greetings or to call for a flag meeting etc.

The counterpart border guarding forces also meet each other and exchange sweets on important occasions like celebration of independence day, Republic day and important festivals like Deepawali, Holi, Eid etc.

Facilitating Trade and Transit

Realising the importance of improving bilateral trade, India and its neighbours are opening up to possibilities of greater cooperation in Border Management. The Department of Border Management under the MHA has set up a "Land Ports Authority". This authority is responsible for selecting locations and setting up "Land Customs Stations (LCS)" and Integrated Check Posts (ICP)". Several such LCS and ICPs have been setup along Indo-Bangladesh, Indo-Nepal and Indo-Pakistan border. Many more will be coming up in near future. These ICPs and LCS have proved very useful in easing the trade and transit. These facilities also cater to the transit trade through India to the land locked Nepal and Bhutan.

The setting up of LCS and ICPs involves seamless integration of all agencies involved in facilitating border trade and transit of persons by locating them at one location, creating data bank which is accessible to all these agencies to ensure smooth flow of traffic. As is apparent from the nomenclature, LCSs are meant only for import/export/transit of goods. Entry or exit of persons is not permitted from these. On the other hand, the ICPs are equipped with integrated infrastructure for transit of both goods and persons. It is essential that the LCS and ICPs be equipped with modern facilities to avoid delays.

Smooth hassle free transit through borders also necessitates that agencies deployed on LCSs and ICPs coordinate with their counterpart across the border. This is important because advance information of likely traffic if available to the agencies obviates any chances of delay. BSF will have the responsibility of ensuring security and preventing contraband from passing through these facilities whose overall management rests with Customs.

Border Haats

The concept of Border Haats has been introduced along Indo-Bangladesh border with the aim of promoting trade of local products at Border itself. These haats aim at promoting wellbeing of the people dwelling in remote areas across the borders of two countries by establishing a traditional system of marketing the local produce through local markets.

It is a market place organized by two countries one day each week. It is not only a market place for buying items of daily need but also a reunion spot for families living on both sides of borders.

Four such Border Haats are functional at Kalaichar, Balat, (Meghalaya)and Srinagar Kamlasagar (Tripura). Further, Govt. of India and Bangladesh have agreed to establish total 06 more Border Haats, which include 04 at Bholaganj, Nalikata (Ghumaghat), Shibari&Ryngkua in the state of Meghalaya and 02 at Palbasti (Rangana) &Kamalpur in the state of Tripura. Border haatscan solve problem of smuggling of items of daily use to a great extent. The border population which cannot afford to take their products to bigger markets in the hinterland are thus facilitated in getting a fair price for their product without travelling to great distance.

The trade at Border Haats is permitted in Indian Rupees/ Bangladesh Taka and also on barter basis. The data of all such trade carried out is maintained by Haat management committee of the respective Border Haat.

These Border Haats have proved very effective in facilitating local trade as indicated by volume of trade carried out. As per data furnished by the concerned State Governments, cash trade

equivalent to Indian Rupees 1686.62 lakhs was carried out at the above four border haats in the five-year period ending 2015-16.

The government of India has also executed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the government of Myanmar for the establishment of border haats along that border.

In addition, proposal of 62 more border haats along Indo-Bangladesh border has also been initiated.

Conclusion

Border guarding is a restrictive function that treats borders as barriers whereas Border management is an integrating theme gradually converting the borders into bridges for benefit of communities living on both sides of it.

Border Management is not just the unidimensional function of border guarding. It involves cooperation amongst various agencies operating in border areas and their smooth integration for greater effectiveness. Border Management is a multidimensional and multiagency function aimed at improving the quality of life of border population.

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